The
COMMONWEAL
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Hitler's Indirect Speech

HITLER'S speech did not contain any ultimatum. He did not say, as he has on occasions, "Give me this by such an hour, or I will go to war." His self-restraint gave most of the world encouragement; the stock market went up; Premier Chamberlain could talk further about appeasement. It is good to work for appeasement and it is impossible to do so if it first becomes fixed in the mind that all Nazis are mad and utterly irresponsible and that Hitler has no regard at all for the life and well-being of anyone in Europe or the rest of the world. Hitler undoubtedly wants to settle world conditions in his own way, and whatever kind of movement it is which he leads, we should try to understand the way he wants and see what values there are in that way. A man cannot safely be treated like a mad dog, and especially not Hitler.

What Are Words For?

Any honest person must admit that there were many incidental truths in Hitler's last speech and that some of the moral judgments he made are good. There were also particular lies: we cite his talk about religious persecution and the sentence, "It is therefore a piece of impertinence—to put it mildly—for foreign politicians to talk about hostility to religion in the Third Reich." This directly contradicts the Pope and common knowledge. But the long address was a unit, a lump sum, a world view which Hitler apparently wants to force people to accept in all, or altogether reject. This is an infuriating tactic also used by Marxists and anti-Marxists, but used by him most despicably of all. We admit many of Hitler's truths and see many of the hypocrisies and wrongs he signalizes, but we reject utterly his whole speech, the methods he hints at for righting wrongs, the wrong theories and the lies he amalgamates into his outlook. Perhaps the greatest danger of his speech is that individuals throughout the world will recognize within it certain truths which Hitler's most vocal enemies pass over or deny, and certain feelings which are legitimate, and that these individuals, welcoming the expression of these truths and feelings, many of them unpopular in liberal circles, will accept the whole vicious Nazi amalgam as all in all the better way, "the lesser evil." The power of Nazi propaganda has been well tested and has been disastrously effective.

The New Collective Security

THE LAST few days in Washington have at least made amply clear one thing: the President, backed by a large portion of his Cabinet, is resolved that the United States should extend to Great Britain and France every possible assistance in their efforts to arm themselves against the "aggressor" nations. For some months now our aviation manufacturers have been quietly filling large orders from abroad. The State Department's reports of licenses granted and actual exports under license show that the Dutch East Indies and Siam in the Far East have been building up their air defenses for months. In December alone we shipped to Siam over $400,000 worth of fighting planes. England, also, has been buying heavily. But public attention was forcibly drawn to French purchases when on January 24 a Curtiss Hawk pursuit plane built for the French government exceeded all speed records in a test dive at Buffalo. A few days later it was learned that earlier in the same week a representative of the French Air Ministry had been seriously injured in the crash of a new type Douglas bomber near Los Angeles. This plane was being tested preparatory to submission to our own War Department. The question immediately arose in Congress as to whether the French were being

France, Our New Frontier

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allowed to participate in American military secrets, under what would amount to a defensive military alliance, or whether, if this was not the case, they were being permitted to buy planes from us of a type which still would be considered "secret." (The War, Navy and State Departments act on the assumption that a plane ceases to be secret one year after the accepted delivery of the second machine of the same type.) Upon investigation it transpired that the presence of the French representative in the Douglas bomber did not meet with the approval of our own Army officials and that it had been made possible through the direct intervention of the Treasury Department. It has since been made clear that this complete cooperation with the French meets with President Roosevelt's approval and that he considers France as America's (and democracy's) "frontier." He has even asked Senators to refrain from criticism of such incidents in the interest of our general foreign policy against the aggressors.

What are we to think of such goings-on? In December alone the State Department approved licenses for airplane exports to France (of which the great bulk were for frankly military planes) worth $1,462,553. If these licenses were largely for combat planes, it can be assumed that they represent at least twenty machines. During the same month actual exports of military planes to France exceeded a quarter of a million dollars in value; similar exports to Britain amounted to almost three-quarters of a million dollars. It is argued that these orders increase the efficiency of American plants and so pave the way for our own rearmament program. It is possible to defend the thesis that we should help friendly nations to the limit of our ability, although THE COMMONWEAL continues to believe that a complete embargo on all frankly military matériel would in the long run be the better policy; but it seems to us that there is no defense at all for the secrecy with which all these activities have been shrouded. If the President has determined in his own mind on what amounts to defensive alliances with France and England, he should have said so at once. That it should require a pure accident to inform Americans of the President's intentions with regard to foreign policy is intolerable.

Hutchins on Federal Support for Education

Genuine Double Standard

PRESIDENT ROBERT MAYNARD HUTCHINS of the University of Chicago, in a current *Saturday Evening Post* (January 28), discusses with his customary lucidity the question of federal support for education. Summarizing the report of President Roosevelt's Advisory Committee on Education, Mr. Hutchins points out the shocking inequalities in educational facilities from state to state, from district to district within various states, and for Negroes and whites in Southern States. This is a complete violation of the essential democratic principle of equal treatment for equals. But left to their own resources the poorer states and districts simply cannot match what is done elsewhere. President Hutchins concludes that, if we are to recognize the basically identical rights of all our citizens regardless of their color or of the part of the nation they inhabit, federal aid is the only solution. To the time-worn objection that such aid will involve federal control his answer is most convincing. Calling upon facts he shows that the federal government actually has been assisting education since 1887, and in ever increasing proportions. In fact, during the five depression years Washington has spent nearly $1,000,000,000 on education through PWA, WPA, CCC and NYA! Yet we have not observed any great protest or need for protest that the federal government is thus taking over the schools. It must be admitted that those who keep insisting on the dangers of centralized control and the power of the purse in the school question lack facts to sustain their contentions. Their argument is a priori and contradicted by the experience of a dozen countries.

In a final passage President Hutchins writes of Catholic schools. He dismisses with proper scorn the "No Popery" basis of much of the opposition to government aid for our schools, and shows the ample precedents for such aid. But he expresses the conviction "that the parochial schools the country over are not as good as the public schools in the same communities." Of course, a just comparison can be made only regarding what they have in common—books and desks and buildings and the teaching of the three R's. In buildings, desks and books we must concede superiority to the public schools generously fed with public funds, although many will debate about the teaching of the three R's. But the very *raison d'être* of parochial schools precludes a complete comparison. Bearing in mind the injunction and promise, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you," the parochial schools educate in the knowledge and service of God and are not immediately concerned about the time when this promise is fulfilled.

A Bill in the New York Legislature

Euthanasia

A NEW association, the Euthanasia Society of America, has just made public the provisions of a bill to be presented in New York for the legalizing of what newspapers call "mercy killing." It is not likely, we think, that such a law will be passed here very soon; but the proposal is significant as showing the spread of an emotional error very grave and very difficult

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to reach because it is bound up with the instinct of compassion. We have already dealt in these columns with the basic objections to euthanasia, which are moral and spiritual. Human life is sacred—this is a principle at the root of all that is vital in our civilization, which it is simply impossible to conjure away at will; we are committed to it, and we must pay for it. Moreover, it is tragically limited and deeply unchristian to view this "payment"—the suffering of apparently incurable people—as the greatest possible evil, instead of as the greatest possible source of heroism, purification and redemption. But for those outside the tradition of Christendom from which these truths spring, who still are able to think instead of merely to feel, there are other, practical considerations which may be urged.

The purpose of the proposal of the Euthanasia Society—"avoiding unnecessary suffering"—is obviously one which permits an indefinitely expanding interpretation. There is an incomputable amount of suffering in the world, and a very large proportion of it indeed might in given circumstances seem "unnecessary" and unbearable. However sure well-intentioned people might be that they could restrict such a law to the conception of suffering they now have in mind, they could not actually restrict it at all. The one hope of restriction lies in the immovable truth that private men cannot ever be given power of life and death over their fellows. Once let loose the principle of legalized killing, and its application would inevitably widen with every year that passed. The provision for a competent board to certify incurables could be set aside readily—certainly, far more readily than the original objection to euthanasia. Cases of doubtful cure or cure indefinitely distant would presently be certified as causing intolerable anguish; and that there would be a growing corps of "volunteers" for death, who can doubt who has followed the dreadful contagion of a suicide wave? Again, there is the practical question of diagnostic error. In some cases, incurability can be affirmed; in others, as we all know, it is affirmed mistakenly. This type of mistake is a permanent possibility in medical diagnosis. What protection could be invented against it if euthanasia were legalized?

The Longshoremen's Party

THOSE individually excellent things, music and beer, are pleasantly linked in current news items about labor. We learn that longshoremen on a Brooklyn pier are to be regaled at their tasks by selections from a broadcasting company celebrated for dinner and dance music. We also learn that the WPA group which finished the furbishing of the Grant mausoleum on Riverside Drive smartly ahead of schedule, were treated to free beer as an official token of appreciation. It should perhaps be made clear, in view of prevailing controversies about funds, that the beer was bought, not by the WPA but by the Grant Memorial Association out of its own private pockets. But that fact does not of course alter the interest of the happening, viewed as a possible incentive to labor. One can imagine debates as to which will pile up ergs more efficaciously, the enjoyment of music during the job, or the prospect of beer after the job. We ourselves incline to the beer, though not, we hasten to say, for subjective or personal reasons. It is merely our judgment that an active experience is more potent than a passive one; and in the cases before us, the beer is actively, the music only passively, taken. If it had been suggested that the longshoremen do their own singing—that their own chanteys be arranged and supplemented, and in general a musical literature developed for them, with the inclusion of some grand opera in deference to Italian workers, who prefer it to all else and often sing it very well—that would be a different matter. The hardest of hard labor has been performed by men thus singing in chorus. But music generated somewhere else and piped in, and moreover graded to suit the psychological needs of the group, as we are informed will be done in Brooklyn, seems too much like Hollywood to be quite real. That is the way they get actors to emote; and unless we are completely misinformed about longshoremen, emoting is not what is expected of them.

Music and Beer

Stabilizing Employment

THE SUCCESS of certain corporations in various fields in spreading out production, adjusting working hours to production needs, stimulating off-season demand and developing special slack-time work is providing a number of American workers with the steady income and employment that are so essential in these troubled days. Many more companies could do likewise if they had a mind to, but too many "rugged individualists" are still in command. The further step of interchange of employment is working successfully from the worker and manager points of view in Chicago, where the Marshall Field department store exchanges employees with various printing shops during respective rush and slack seasons which dovetail rather than coincide. Sleeping-car conductors laid off during the travel slump of the late fall have proved to be efficient floor walkers; idle workers from the lake steamers have also been taken on. This is said to be only a beginning. It is one more challenge to the short-sighted employer and suggests one of the advantages of the

Wills and Ways

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Christian social ideal of vocational groups. But another aspect of this scheme is distinctly disquieting. If so many of us are vocationally interchangeable, how many of the jobs open to the great mass of employables can be said to be genuinely personal or creative? Where is the average victim of the modern impersonal economic system to express himself? For the moment creative leisure would seem to be the only answer. This means universalized adult education and increased community recreational activities of the more vital type. Employed Americans, at least, should have a solid morale.

Propaganda, What Is It?

Public Informers

EVER since the World War the public has become ever more aware of "propaganda," although there is reason to believe that very few people have any clear idea of what the word means. Since the accusation of propaganda is becoming increasingly popular, it is well worth one's while to try inject a little more precision into one's use of the word. A recent issue of *Newsweek* gives an analysis of the best known and perhaps the most effective propaganda agency in this country: the corps of newspapermen presently in the employ of the federal government's various departments and agencies. The tremendous increase in the press relations staffs of the government has been particularly subject to sniping by opponents of the New Deal, yet *Newsweek* points out that "at least 75 percent of the stuff the boys grind out is factual. And the papers are glad to get it. Even the Associated Press, with a working staff of 80 in the capital, confesses it could not give the full Washington coverage it does without the aid of the 'government gang.'" Such a statement implies a distinction between information and propaganda, a distinction which most people probably would consider valid.

Yet, in the last analysis, is there any distinction? The root meaning of the word propaganda is action to propagate, or spread the influence of, a given set of beliefs or a point of view. Is not information concerning the fruits of a point of view translated into action perhaps the best method of convincing people that the point of view deserves to be spread? It is still true that nothing succeeds like success. When we learn the WPA has produced an excellent series of guide books, are we not a little likely to feel that perhaps the WPA is justified? Thus mere information becomes propaganda. Yet who would argue that, in consequence, the existence and qualities of such guide books should be hidden from the public? For many years our government printed at the public expense all sorts of handbooks and manuals useful to various classes of citizens—business men, farmers, public health officials. For years knowledge of these valuable tools was largely hidden under a bushel; review copies were rarely sent to magazines or newspapers; the government did not see fit to advertise. Was this a happy state of affairs? It would seem, then, that almost anything is, from the point of view of an opponent, propaganda. An older, deeper distinction is that between truth and equivocation or downright falsehood.

Rail and Airways Experiment

Forward and Backward

THE GRAND FAIR TOUR arranged by the railroads to take a passenger starting at any station in the country round trip to both the San Francisco and New York World's Fairs and back home for $90 proves that the industry's arteries are by no means fatally hardened. This experiment in "postalization" may not prove much about how to handle the whole complexity of passenger and freight rates, but it should give many citizens the possibility of an interesting summer vacation and rightfully improve the public relations of the railroads. The financial results, when they are in, will furnish rate makers and managers with some experimental knowledge of great value, and, of course it is hoped, some dollars and cents for the many uses to which dollars and cents can be put. At the same time this is announced, Pan American Airways, leader in the new transportation industry, takes an experimental step in what appears to be a backward direction. It is a financial step supposedly indicating maturity and certainly showing that the air companies do not fear the financial set-up of the avowedly senile railways. Equipment trust certificates of $2,500,000 are being issued, bearing 4 per cent interest, to be retired serially from 1940 to 1944. It is an instalment purchase scheme, a bank starting out as major owner of the new aircraft (Pan American puts up 30 percent of the initial equity), and is ambiguously labeled a "pay as you go" plan. It is a deliberate step away from equity financing and toward fixed charges and absentee ownership in an industry which has had as a notable source of financial strength its development through direct stock financing. Perhaps Pan American is confident it can earn more than 4 percent on that $2,500,000. We do not feel, however, that that is the only, or the most important, consideration.

The Liturgies of Political Life

IT IS not so long ago, I remember, that in the rural part of the Province of Quebec election night was a great community event, not to speak of the meetings and parades that preceded the

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actual voting. But the night itself, when the final result could be pretty accurately appraised, was the thing. If the Liberals were known to be winning, then every true Liberal would hitch his horse to his buckboard, pile in his relatives and friends, add a drink or two to the store already consumed, and start on a tour of the town. Often a rifle or shotgun was standard equipment and unfortunate Conservatives were well-advised to be cautious how they showed themselves in public. Even when they did not show themselves, a few buckshot marks were likely to adorn their houses, as mute testimony of their opponents' enthusiasm.

Election goings-on, Fourth of July and Memorial Day celebrations used equally to be a regular features of our own national life. What American does not remember the torch-light parades—"Tippecanoe and Tyler too"—depicted in his school history books? Election high-jinks, it is true, were somewhat riotous, but rarely resulted in serious damage (excepting, perhaps, that once wrought upon the White House furniture during Andrew Jackson's first inauguration). Memorial Day was a more solemn affair, with a drum and bugle corps, an endless parade of school children, veterans and citizens, and equally endless cemetery-speeches by local dignitaries. The Fourth of July produced another impressive turnout and another impressive feast of oratory which, if anything, was stimulated by the hot weather. There are surely still sections of the United States where these rituals are continued, where the light of election Roman candles is commonplace as the shadows grow longer in the fall, and where reecho before the assembled community rededications of our great and glorious nation.

All of this was a ritual—a liturgy—of government. When a Greek citizen made a gift for a public spectacle, he was performing his "liturgy." When the early Christians came together to celebrate the eucharistic sacrament, apart from worshiping God, they were performing a "liturgy," a public, social act, and their Communion not only bestowed divine grace upon them, but satisfied their deep human desire for a feeling of unity, a feeling of participation in something larger than themselves. Their active participation in the offertory procession, with the resultant provision for the priest and the poor, indicates the extent of their social approach to worship.

The torchlight election parade and the older way of commemorating our independence accomplished the same psychological purpose, in the realm of politics, and through liturgies. They brought our citizens together, and made them emotionally participants in a common destiny, in a common way of life. But the rationalism and individualism of the nineteenth century gradually ate away at general participation in such things. It became a little indecent to celebrate an election victory in public, a little shocking to march in a parade, distinctly dull to consider patriotic oratory anything but silly and hypocritical. Particularly as party machines became more and more systematized, more and more devoted to the single task of getting out the voters on election day and less and less to the task of arousing the voters' deep or continuing loyalty to a cause, our political life has lost most of its color and has—with conspicuous exceptions, when great popular issues are involved—fallen back upon a few ritualistic rather than ritual occasions, which everyone concerned considers a dreadful bore.

The greatest contribution of our "total" friends—communist and fascist—to the little (and terribly important) arts of government has been to recognize the drabness, the frock-coatedness, of our modern political life; for in England the spirit of the Dickensian hustings has largely gone; in Germany the pageantry of the Hohenzollern court, of the mammoth military reviews and parades disappeared when William II took to the saw-buck. Only in Russia was communism carrying on—and expanding—a living tradition. Having recognized this, almost instinctively, Mussolini and Hitler have known how to stage superb liturgies. They have built *fora* expressly for the purpose. Hitler remembers the irresistible effect of the old military *Grosser Zapfenstreich,* the "solemn taps," with its myriad torches carried through traditional convolutions, almost as in a barbaric dance; he has adapted it to political life, and intensified its mass-appeal. Only recently we have seen in photographs the symbolic handing over to the Fuehrer by the workmen who built it of the great new Reich Chancellery in Berlin. What a master of liturgical invention is *unser Adolf!*

Is it not time that the "democracies" began looking to their liturgy? Part of the success of Huey Long was certainly to be attributed to his knowledge of how to make the people of Louisiana feel wholly like Louisianans. Recently a more innocent manifestation of how deep is the human yearning for communion in action has been supplied by Texas's "hillbilly" Governor, W. Lee O'Daniel. Sixty thousand people danced in the streets of Austin the evening of his inaugural and there were thirty-seven bands. The usual single inaugural reception was not enough; five were required to accommodate the crowds. There was a full-dress historical pageant, and ten thousand school children singing, "Oh Beautiful, Beautiful Texas." And it was such tactics as this which, certainly more than his political objectives, won Mr. O'Daniel his office. The picture story in *Life* (January 30) indicates that everyone had a wonderful time.

Perhaps a few more torchlight parades, a few more brass bands intelligently injected into American life, with a dozen or two Billy Roses as impresarios, might steal some of the fire of the Marxian comrades and the proto-fascists. H. L. B.

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Debts and Recovery[1]

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

AT LONG last, the problem of debt in the capitalistic structure is beginning to receive adequate investigation. It is being "discovered." The Committee on Debt Adjustment of the Twentieth Century Fund has approached the whole subject with a certain solemnity and perhaps too much timidity, but with a thoroughness that provides a vast amount of important data for future studies and conclusions.

For the last two hundred years or more, economists at large have stood abjectly in awe of the debt system, and especially of the system by which business finances itself heavily with borrowed money (e.g., bonds) instead of with ownership money, that is, stock. They have taken it almost as much for granted as the medieval scientists took for granted the geocentric concept of the universe. Hence, debts have nearly always been discussed in such terms as these: how much debt can we stand? are debts rising too rapidly? how rapidly can debts be safely curtailed? what is the proper balance between debt financing and ownership financing? Almost no one has asked: should we have any debt financing at all?

To those who have taken the trouble seriously to study debt and its widespread effects on the whole economic system, this attitude has appeared like that of the physician who considers the drug addict solely from the view of how much drug the patient can continue to stand without complete collapse.

Thus, as long as we start off with the assumption that debt (always, theoretically, "in moderation") is a good thing, or even that debt is a necessary evil, we shall find ourselves forever in the turmoil induced by just such questions as those suggested above. We shall always be trying to decide whether the patient—meaning the whole economic system—can stand a little more debt or not. What we need, and need desperately, is the complete freedom of approach which enables us to ask and ask continuously and persistently whether or not we need debt at all in order to assure economic progress and attain economic stability.

It is quite possible, of course, that some of the committee members of the Twentieth Century Fund believe in their heart of hearts that the debt system, as such, is thoroughly iniquitous. We can assume, however, that they have taken the so-called practical viewpoint, confining their research to debt as it is, rather than debt as it should be or should not be. In spite of this self-imposed limitation, the study they have made commands instant respect as a source book of invaluable information.

In addition, we find here and there certain broad hints as to the real and underlying danger of the entire debt system. We find the committee reporting, for instance, apropos of the great depression:

> Once business had turned downward, however, there is little room for doubt that debt difficulties were among the chief influences which made the situation grow cumulatively worse.

We also find them admitting that one of the major economic functions of debt is "to enable inactive investors to put capital into business without accepting all the risks of full ownership." They emphasize still another extremely unfavorable aspect of the debt system, and that is the incentive it provides for constantly greater speculation. This passage in their report is so important as to merit almost complete quotation. They say:

> Still further, the splitting up of ownership through debt tends toward speculation, in that people who are optimistic about the future of certain property, and therefore want to buy it, can reinforce the economic weight of their opinion by borrowing to buy that property, thus being able to buy more than if they had to own it outright. At the same time, the pessimistic sellers can obtain an income, while waiting for prices to come down, by lending money to the optimists, thus creating a market for what they want to sell. The existence of this supposedly "non-speculative" form of investment, accordingly, does in some ways lead to speculation.

The above quotation certainly is more of an admission than a strong argument. Those who are familiar with the facts that a large part of the securities bought are purchased with borrowed funds, that nearly every business enterprise is, to some extent, on a margin basis in the sense that it borrows for part of its operations, and that many huge enterprises, such as the railroads of the United States, have been built almost entirely with borrowed money for the sake of added stockholder profits, would be more likely to suggest that this (supposedly) non-speculative form of investment does in nearly every case, and on a very wide scale, lead to enormous speculation!

Again, the committee does a good service in mild language by pointing to the added peril which a large debt structure creates in times of depression. They say:

[1] Debts and Recovery; A Study of Changes in the Internal Debt Structure from 1929 to 1937 and A Program for the Future; published by the Twentieth Century Fund in New York. $2.75.

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> The claims of creditors to a fixed income threaten drastic redistribution of the reduced total of national income; and their claims against the property of debtors threaten a redistribution of property ownership. In acute cases, such as the great depression, it appears that to let these changes take their course would mean social collapse.

This is, of course, true and should be taken as an indictment of the debt system itself. To run our whole system on a series of debt contracts, which, in their very nature, should not be allowed to run their course the moment difficulties arise, is the broadest kind of admission that the debt system itself is unwarranted and unsound.

The analogy of our present system with its debt structure to a drug addict is further enforced by the following comment of the committee:

> Not only do few debtors intend to get out of debt when their obligations mature, but the economic system is so made up that any sudden and general attempt to get out of debt would be a great calamity. If the banks tried successfully to pay off their debts, for instance, they would deprive us of most of what serves us as money in this country, and we should have a catastrophic fall of prices. If merchants all paid off their debts in a short time, they would either have to go out of business or to press their debtors unmercifully.

The analogy to the condition of a drug addict who cannot be deprived of his drug abruptly without the threat of complete collapse is almost too painful and too obvious to need comment.

The committee also makes some important admissions concerning the threat to a very intangible but necessary virtue in any economic society—namely, hope. We find, for instance, the following:

> Even more important than the effect of debt on income distribution in depression is its effect on property distribution. If the mortgage debtor is forced out by foreclosure of his mortgage, he not only suffers during the business decline, but is cut off from his hope of recovery when revival comes. The same applies to stockholders whose ownership of corporations is wiped out by reorganization. It was largely to prevent debtor groups from losing their economic foothold in this way that the government intervened in the situation in 1932 and in later years.

This statement, if only it were given still greater emphasis, would be an imposing challenge to those who say, very calmly, that the foreclosing of debt contracts merely involves a change of ownership, and that property values themselves are not seriously disturbed. The destruction of human hopes is all too often left out of the economist's thinking. As the Twentieth Century Fund Committee virtually admits, the debt system is only workable provided it is not allowed to work. Otherwise, it destroys not only values, but human hopes, and, in doing so, destroys one of the greatest moral qualities of citizenship.

THE MAIN body of the Twentieth Century Fund report is devoted to a close analysis of the various kinds of debt, both short term and long term, and the rather astonishing changes that have taken place within the debt structure during and since the great depression. The report closes however, with certain fundamental and practical recommendations of the Twentieth Century Fund Committee on Debt Adjustment. It is in this concluding chapter that we find the chief source of disappointment.

For instance, in spite of the passages already quoted, in which the committee makes it clear that the effect of debt on various groups, through foreclosure, is often most unfortunate and destructive of human hopes, the committee states in its findings:

> It is doubtful whether a single figure for national wealth has any significance. It is certain that a single figure for total internal debts has none. Every debt is owed not merely by someone, but to someone. To say that debts total 250 billion means little more than it would to say that since every debt payable is also a debt receivable, the grand total of debts is zero. A ratio between two such figures as total debts and national wealth can never be more than a statistical curiosity.

This, of course, is pure nonsense when applied to the effect of the debt system on individuals and individual groups. To take only the instance, already cited by the committee, of the destruction of hope by the foreclosing of mortgages on property, that comment would be meaningless if we were to accept the statement quoted just above that a ratio of debt to wealth is meaningless simply because, in bookkeeping terms, it cancels out. One of the greatest evils of debt is precisely the fact that it is real, individual, human beings who owe certain debts and other, individual, human beings who own the debt claims, and that the transfers of ownership involved through foreclosure from one group to another work incalculable moral harm to the debtors.

The committee is on sounder ground, however, when they do admit that the proportion of national income required to meet interest payments does illustrate the evils of the debt system. They show that whereas 6.3 percent of national income was required to meet debt payments in 1929, some 12.5 percent was required to meet debt payments in 1932.

Finally, in its recommendations, the committee very nearly cancels out the value of its fatuous statement that debt to wealth is an unimportant ratio, because it says:

> The financial pattern of business is at best only a distorted reflection of the objective realities of the production, distribution, sale, and use of goods and services. To cast a large part of that financial pattern into the rigid mold of debt is dangerous. It represents

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> an attempt to make immutable a set of valuations which at best reflect ill-formulated estimates of an uncertain future.

This, I submit, is a direct refutation of the committee's own statement of the meaningless character of the debt to wealth ratio. By the committee's own admission, debt serves to cast a large part of our financial pattern into a rigid mold, whereas wealth (the other side of the ratio) is admittedly a fluctuating matter, depending upon intangible appraisals of the property pledged directly or indirectly for the purposes of creating debt. Hence, if for no other reason, the ratio of debt to wealth would have very real importance in indicating the extent to which fluctuating property values are offset by a rigid total of dollar indebtedness created against those property values.

It is an interesting and appalling fact that our debts in 1932 equaled 60 percent of our wealth, whereas in 1914 they equaled only 30 percent of our wealth!

Ultimately, the Twentieth Century Fund Committee arrives at the extremely sound recommendation that "our economic system would be far more healthy if debt financing were used less frequently." They recommend that "measures should be taken to reduce its extent." As a timid entering wedge of what should be a broad argument against the whole principle of debt financing, this is a statement for which we should be duly thankful.

It is reinforced by the further suggestion that "where more flexible methods of financing even approach the convenience of debt financing, they should be used."

The specific recommendations of the committee can be summarized as follows. First of all, they propose that the existing laws and rules which favor debt financing by forcing insurance companies, savings banks and trustees to invest almost entirely in debts should be relaxed and perhaps eventually abolished. To anyone familiar with the dilemma facing trustees, insurance companies and savings banks today, this suggestion seems vastly important and very much in the right direction.

The second recommendation is that further new and refunding issues of securities by federal, state and municipal governments should not carry exemption from income taxes. This, too, is a vastly important recommendation for the simple reason that tax exemption has made it all too easy for governmental agencies to increase debts. It has put an investment premium, so to speak, on the tax-exempt type of security, and thus made it possible for governmental units to absorb almost unlimited funds from heavily taxed investors for purposes which would not bear even rough and ready scrutiny.

The third recommendation is that governmental agencies should strive to discourage debt financing rather than encourage it, as they do now, through income tax policy regulation and utility rates and control of local government debts. The arguments in favor of this general proposal involve considerable detailed discussion of the effect of income taxes and rate regulation on the encouragement of debt. Without going into these details, it can be fairly stated that this proposal, if carried out, would make taxable the income of corporations now applied to interest payments, and would thus lessen the temptation to finance companies very heavily through debt as well as through stock ownership.

The fourth recommendation is somewhat more technical, but also thoroughly sound; namely, that plans for the repayment of debts should be related to the economic life and earning power of the pledged assets. There are several other recommendations of more or less technical character, followed by one which, in principle at least, strikes at the heart of the whole problem. This states that "further reform in the adjustment of debt should aim to secure conversion of debt into direct ownership in corporate reorganizations and to increase the flexibility of debt contracts." If taken at its face value, what this really means is that debt should be recognized less and less as debt in the legal sense and more and more as a real form of ownership, regardless of legal definitions. My only objection to this is that it involves a change in the law and practice concerning debts, without admitting that the theory of the debt structure itself is the basic source of the trouble. Their real difficulty is implied, but it is by no means expressed.

By and large, the implications of the Twentieth Century Fund report, if taken at their full value, do constitute one of the most radical documents put forward for many a long year by any responsible agency. The inconsistencies pointed out above merely obscure the underlying meaning of part of these implications. What the report really implies—although its authors may vigorously deny this—is that the debt system, at its very best, is merely a necessary evil and a temporary convenience, and that during many important periods, it is not only an unmitigated nuisance, but a force clearly destructive of most of the moral values for which people work and strive. Some day, we hope, an agency of sufficient prestige and influence will tell the unvarnished truth about debts. When that day comes, we can expect the debt system, as the chief enemy of sound ownership of private property, to become one of the major political and economic issues. As an issue, it will then dominate that part of the world which still believes the private use of capital to be a safeguard of human freedom.

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One Hundred Churches in Seven Years

By H. A. REINHOLD

IN 1831 Paris had 560,000 inhabitants and her *banlieue,* i.e., her suburbs, 164,000. Exactly one hundred years later the formerly fortified city had almost 3,000,000, the *banlieue* more than 2,000,000, people. So the inner city had six times as many inhabitants, while the outskirts grew twelve times as large.

For 5,000,000 Parisians there were 110 parishes in the city and 158 in the *banlieue;* that means parishes averaging 26,000 and 12,300 souls respectively. Quite apart from the distances involved, every pastor and bishop knows that this is an impossible state of affairs, especially when one considers the fact that these figures are only average; there actually were parishes with more than 100,000 souls. According to standards of other countries, these parishes could have been bishoprics. How, then, could there be any personal contact between the pastor and his faithful? How could any priest master a census of this size? How could a feeling of family spirit exist in churches in which everything was necessarily run in an impersonal way? Members of such parishes must have felt like strangers in their own church. Under such circumstances the liturgical and community life of a parish decays into something so mechanical and strange that nobody can escape utter individualism. The parish life shrinks within a small circle of some hundred elect flocking around the individual priest and pious organization, while the great mass has to be neglected perforce, and an enormous leakage begins to sap the strength of the Church as a whole.

There were two problems to be solved: the old city parishes had to be divided into adequate, new districts and the *banlieue* needed entire reorganization. On the former fortifications the city of Paris was building huge blocks of modern apartment homes and further out, *cités jardins*—districts of small houses, with vegetable and flower gardens—were rapidly being set up. One could not expect the people who had settled there and who had been neglected for years to wax very enthusiastic over the idea of making great financial sacrifices to build their new churches. Some individual parishes might be able to provide a dignified house of God for them, but a far greater common effort had to be made to carry out a systematic plan for the reconquering of Paris for Christ. What would be the use of burdening single pastors and poor flocks with heavy debts, which would cripple all parish activities for years to come, force the priests to preach on money all the year round and let the settlement of a priest in a hitherto empty parish look like a personal enterprise? There are too many prejudices to overcome, too many anticlericals to appease and too many communists to be made Christians. The Church could not afford having her zeal misunderstood right from the beginning.

Cardinal Verdier, like a true pastor, in spite of his enormous diocese of almost 5,000,000 putative Catholics, courageously shouldered the burden and responsibility of providing Paris with churches. As his assistant he chose a man whom one can really term the right man in the right place: Monsignor Touzé, his Vicar General in charge of all affairs connected with church extension in his archdiocese. This was the start of what now every Parisian proudly calls the *chantiers du Cardinal*—the building projects of the Cardinal.

As this enormous enterprise was started at the height of unemployment and depression, there is also a social aspect to it which reconciled even the anticlericals and radicals. Cardinal Verdier came to the help of the poor of Paris by giving them the best one can give: work and employment. And it did not only help the poor of the working class who, after all, may find relief, but countless artists, craftsmen and many architects were provided with work for more than seven years.

Only very few large churches were needed. Most of them were to be comparatively small and modest, serving small suburban parishes. No costly material, but local stone and timber, concrete, glass and steel were necessary. No architect or pastor would be able to cover up his lack of taste, or poor design and deficiency in handling his problem, through expensive material and extravagant furniture. Poverty, or at least modesty, would bring out the real master, and "beauty would look after herself," as Eric Gill puts it.

A huge demonstration of Catholic solidarity was expected. The strong ones had to stand up for the weaker, those who had for the have-nots, and poor people were expected to make sacrifices for their poorer brethren. Catholicism in Paris was expected to stand a test of its generosity and magnanimity.

The Archbishop knew his flock and he was not disappointed in his expectations. A wave of enthusiasm swept Paris and France. Even from abroad alms and subscriptions came in. In a few months the *chantiers du Cardinal* were a new gem in the crown of heroic French Catholicism.

With an audacity resembling that of medieval princes of the Church, Cardinal Verdier asked his

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people on Christmas Day, 1931, to help him build one hundred churches, big and small, elaborate and modest. Sixty were needed right away. Then twenty would follow as soon as the first sixty were finished. For the last twenty—*Deus providebit*. He intended to do it all within twenty or thirty years. But unemployment harrowed the country. Laborers, artists, craftsmen and architects were idle. He discarded his time limits and made up his mind to shorten the building period to one-fourth of that first announced. One hundred churches in six years!

Within a few months the vicar general had bought fifty-three sites and acquired leases for ninety-nine years on others. The city of Paris, the administration of the Seine district and the "cheap housing authorities" cooperated amicably. In the spring, seventeen sites were already alive with excavations and construction. In the spring of 1934, the Cardinal opened his sixtieth *chantier* in Charonne, and when he saw that unemployment showed no signs of disappearing he said: "I shall continue my work until I have reached my hundredth *chantier*." When I made my sight-seeing tour with Monsignor Touzé last July, the *chantiers* amounted to the fantastic number of 103, of which 92 were already finished: all this in six years and seven months in a country ridden by unemployment, inflation, radicalism and the threat of military aggression!

Sixty-two out of ninety-two new churches can seat 1,000 to 1,500 faithful. St. Pierre de Chaillot, St. Esprit and St. John Bosco are veritable cathedrals, with 3,500 seats. The remaining thirty have 400 to 500 seats and have small presbyteries and parish halls. Nearly all of these churches have the necessary accessories, many of them schools and convents.

Although these parishes are still too large for intensive "pastorization," some of them show gains in baptisms in the past three or four years of from 20 percent to 70 percent of all children born; church weddings from 15 percent to 60 percent; funerals from 22 percent to 80 percent. In one parish the priest started catechism with 62 children. Now he has 487, of which he took 234 away with him to the seaside and mountain camps on vacation, combining a Catholic environment with life outdoors and friendly surroundings, away from metropolitan slums. As most French priests of the cities run summer camps during the vacation season, one can imagine how much the Cardinal's hundred projects will change the Paris of the next generation.

Six hundred architects had offered their cooperation in this great enterprise. The Cardinal selected only those who were outstanding in their capacity and who were not objectionable as Catholics. With a few exceptions only one order has been given to each of them. This was done out of a sense of justice and in order to prevent graft. It was also hoped to bring out a variety of conceptions and to help young talents. No one architect was to monopolize this grand enterprise and enrich himself and his dependents.

THIS is not the place to criticize this great work. One could object to the policy adopted in the actual architecture of most of these churches and lament a missed opportunity for showing the true progressiveness and leadership of the Church in art. Many of the buildings show a lack of courage in breaking with dead conventions and speak an idiom of the past. Others are victims of a desire to "create" a style and show absurd details of decoration and freakish attempts at being original *á tout prix*. Some, like St. Theresa at Elisabethville, are real atrocities and show no understanding of the true value of modern materials, and a lack of functional character. A replica of the Hagia Sophia, of medieval Perigueux architecture or of southern French romanesque, all in reinforced concrete, are absurdities which hamper the grand conception of the builder-Cardinal, even when they catch the "atmosphere" as well as do St. Esprit and St. Pierre-Chaillot; but so, oftentimes, does Hollywood or San Simeon!

If any appreciation be permitted, I think the work of Vidal, although clinging to a certain tradition, is by far the best, especially his lovely St. Jean de Cachan, the Cardinal's "pet," and Our Lady of the Flowers in St. Maur-des-Fossés. Both are simple, unpretentious and show a touching love for details and clean craftsmanship.

Monsignor Touzé told me how one of the masons employed by Vidal fell in love with this idea of building churches for the people and through the people. He spent overtime on the *chantier* in order to do special brick work, the result of which is to be seen in the beautiful, figurative masonry of St. Jean de Cachan. This creative activity, having no commercial value whatever, brought forth some of the qualities of which Eric Gill so often deplores the lack in modern church building.

A very interesting feature in the whole reorganization plan is the attitude of the young clergy. On the southern fortification, Boulevard Lefebre, the architect Azéma has built an attractive church in concrete, glass, brick and plaster, which, if not a striking example of modern architecture in spite of its interesting modern concrete spire, has a spiritual aspect which makes it a model for many future churches. Adjoining the main sacristy, there are five studies or offices for the pastor and his assistants. If they are not visiting in the parish or "off," the faithful will always find their priests within the very church "on duty." The only access for outsiders is through the church, thus enticing the parishioners to pray on their way in and out,

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and influencing their attitudes when they have to go to see their priest. There is a truly religious atmosphere; those coming with bad intentions had better leave them behind. It induces the priests, too, to see themselves more as guardians of the spiritual. Above these sacristy-studies are the very plain and modest living quarters of the priests, who lead a community life, although they are secular. Cardinal Verdier hopes his young clergy will adopt this form of life generally, although he exerts no pressure on those who cannot, or will not, live under this stricter form of community life. The young curate who showed me around told me that the younger generation was very happy and had no desire to go back to the old system of greater personal comfort and ease. (The old system left the question of his quarters entirely up to the individual priest.)

When Monsignor Touzé started work for his Cardinal in 1931, he knew that a sound psychological approach would do half the work. A sound approach in those years of depression was to strike the social note. One morning the Parisians found every empty wall, all metro-stations and every board covered with a startling poster, showing unemployed laborers, architects and craftsmen rushing to a *chantier du Cardinal,* glad to obtain work at a decent wage and under exemplary social conditions. One franc tickets were sold at church doors. Within two months the boy scouts collected the sum of 800,000 francs.

But the Cardinal needed a big sum as capital. On the second Sunday after Easter, 1932, he explained his financial plan to his flock by means of a pastoral letter. Twenty million francs, divided into twenty thousand shares at one thousand francs each, to be redeemed in thirty years, were given out on subscription. Within four hours the last share was sold. A quarterly informs the faithful meticulously through articles, accounts and pictures how far the work has progressed and, all the year round, Monsignor Touzé and two assistants tour the diocese, preaching at all services in three different churches to remind the faithful to take up collections and to renew enthusiasm. Twenty committees of ladies collect annually 500,000 francs, and 280,000 francs were netted from bazaars last year. Besides, there is a constant stream of large and small sums pouring in at the *archevéché* in the Rue Barbet de Jouy, where Monsignor Touzé has his headquarters. Monsignor Touzé told us striking instances of how the poor in the neighborhood of new parishes gave all they could, and more, to the great cause. Of course, the new parishes have their regular collections for their own church, and its interior furniture is left to their own effort and the personal benevolence of wealthier parishioners. But very wisely, the interior furniture and statuary cannot be acquired without the artistic advice of the architect and the diocesan art committee. This regulation is a protection for local priests against unwise or inappropriate gifts by over-zealous parishioners.

I cannot conclude this brief report without paying homage to the pioneer and forerunner of this new conquest of France's capital: Pierre Lhande, S.J. He not only opened the campaign for the forgotten suburbs and their priests ten years ago, but through his faithful cooperation Monsignor Touzé has been able to carry out a truly spiritual publicity for his Cardinal's secular enterprise. Father Lhande, S.J., has his full share of reward in the glories of Catholic Paris.

Improvements by Frankenstein

By C. J. WOOLLEN

MORE and more of those machines that produce both your ticket and your change are making their appearance on the London Tube stations. The London Passenger Transport Board, which controls transport in the metropolis and its surroundings, has announced that, while there were only 7 in June, 1937, 170 had been installed, according to plan, by November, 1938; and they promise 350 by December, 1939. They say that passengers like them. No doubt they do. The slot-machine is something that continues to attract our pennies even after we have left childhood behind. It is so fascinating that we are delighted to have an excuse for probing its mysteries. But although these machines may give joy to thousands of passengers, I am quite sure that the sight of them sickens the gentlemen whom they have displaced in the dispensing of tickets.

It is said, however, that machines do not displace men; that actually they make more work. Those who say this would seem to have some statistics to support them. For in spite of the new drive for more and more mechanization which has lately been speeding-up Great Britain, there were on October 17, 23,000 more at work than there were on September 12. But it is now some years since a writer in the *Spectator* showed that figures of this kind shed no light at all on the unemployment situation; figures, indeed, are dull things at the best of times. Economists in England are now beginning to acknowledge that the unemploy-

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ment problem is only partially a problem of unemployment; that it is, in fact, mainly a problem of partial employment.

If, for example, there are 100 men at work in a certain district on January 1, and 120 at work twelve months later, there are, on the face of it, 20 more men at work. But it may happen that only 40 men were employed regularly throughout the year. Besides the 20 additional men who form part of the 120, there may be 60 others who are quite a different 60 from the 60 who with the permanent 40 made up the original 100. It follows, then, that there are as many as 140 who have been unemployed during part of the year, in addition to those who the whole year through had no employment at all. Two English writers, Messrs. Reynolds and Coulson, in their book, "Human Needs in Modern Society" (Jonathan Cape, London, 1938) state that "close on half the working population find themselves out of a job at some time or other during the year. Over a period of years the fraction of the working population that experiences no unemployment at all is quite small."

But while there is plenty of planning for machines, there is little or no planning for men. Big Business can regulate the supply of machines; it even promises them in advance: but it cannot promise work, because it says that that is a question of supply and demand. If you can get your ticket and your change from a machine, get down to the platform by stepping on the moving staircase, open the door of the railway carriage by pressing a button, and reverse the process at the other end, uniformed officials obviously tend to become merely ornamental.

The Board would doubtless tell you that their huge program of new works is making more work for thousands. There are elaborate reconstructions at the Tube stations; new underground lines are being bored; and other lines electrified. One hundred and thirty-six miles of tram routes have been completely abandoned in favor of trolleybuses, and the rails themselves are being removed. By the end of June, 1938, 966 new trolleybuses had been bought, and 643 more were in course of construction. And there is also a garage building scheme.

But there is nothing in all this that promises permanency of employment. You cannot, it is true, mechanize drivers, but it seems you can get machines to do most other work. Money-changing by machine is nothing. In a bank in Sydney, New South Wales, there is a machine which sorts, counts and tests coins. It can decide in one-tenth of a second whether a coin is spurious or not, and it is said that on busy days it does the work of about twenty men. Bookkeeping, of course, has been done by machine for a long time past. But it is pleasing to hear that the municipal finance of Leeds recently got into a rare muddle through the failure of the corporation's mechanical bookkeepers. Presumably the authorities had to fall back on human beings to get them out of the mess. Robot voices on the 'phone are no longer a rarity; and there have been various demonstrations of robots which are supposed to talk and walk. So much so, that we are beginning to think that even the robot is sometimes spurious; that, machines having ousted men, men are attempting to regain favor by aping the machine.

But man was not made to be a machine; and when your level of efficiency is machines and not men, it is the men and not the machines that normally break down. At a meeting in England of the National Committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union in June, 1938, it was said that out of 5,322 members on benefit, 223 were in mental hospitals and 259 were suffering from various forms of nervous trouble. This means that one in eleven of those on benefit was either in a mental hospital or suffering from nervous trouble. And the cost to the society was £15,900 a year.

The London Transport Passenger Board estimates that its total expenditure on the new works will be £45,000,000. Already over £22,000,000 has been spent, and a certain amount has been raised by loan. Truly, this craze for machines is costly. And what makes it more crazy still is that it does not pay particularly well as a business proposition. For the Board's average dividend on its "C" stock over five years has been 3.95 per cent, whereas if the stockholders do not receive 5½, they may demand that the concern be wound up! Who then really benefits by all this mechanization? Perhaps the professional "money-changers"? And have even they gone so machine mad that they are becoming incapable of counting the cost? "Passengers like them," they say of the machines. But even passengers will not like them much longer. For we hear that fares are going up!

Lack of Light

If ever suddenly color fail, a fair
Exchange for eyes too blinded by its sight,
Or sound become silence ringing upon air
All sorrowful tunes familiar to their night,
Or ever feeling lose her bleeding hand—
Leaving touch stony in the acquainted cold
Of nothingness—or ever over land
Dark become light, light dark, both stumbling fold
Their enmity about the other:—I'd know
Here was the edge, the world's rim beaten thin,
The track that defiled purity of snow
Or purged with purity earth's show of sin.
Though never indeed do color, sound and sight
For long seem colorless by lack of light.

ALBERT CLEMENTS.

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The Brother Who Came

By ALBERT EISELE

"IS THERE any word yet from John? Or from August?" asked Peter Roth again. "The funeral is tomorrow."

There was none, they told him. Immediately at Ottilia's death telegrams had been sent to Peter's three brothers—John, August and Steve. John, the eldest, was a well-to-do shoe merchant in New Jersey. August had prospered on a dairy farm in Wisconsin. Steve lived in South Dakota.

"Of course," said the bereaved husband, "I don't expect Steve to come. He hasn't had a crop in seven years. But I do look for John and August."

"Don't worry, Grandpa," said one of his grandsons; "I'll go right now to the depot and meet the four o'clock train, and somebody may show up."

But the grandson returned alone from the depot. The mild January day drew to a close: the icicles on the farmhouse ceased to lengthen. And by nightfall none of Peter Roth's three brothers had appeared. The house was, however, filled with people from Ottilia's side.

Ottilia had been one of a family of twelve, the stock a virile and teeming one. Ottilia herself, now in her casket at seventy, had borne ten children, all of whom survived her. Grandsons and granddaughters had materialized in such abundance that many of them had grown up almost, as it were, unnoticed—had blossomed one by one and unheralded into young manhood and young womanhood. And now they had all come to the wake, these grandchildren, together with their parents; and together with nieces and nephews of the deceased, and friends, acquaintances and neighbors, in a stream that poured endlessly into the house with all the appearance of people pouring into a public hall.

The farmhouse was a large and modern one, but by eight o'clock it was packed to the doors. By nine a few of the people began leaving, and by ten the crowd had been thinned out by half. And it was also at ten that a car swung into the yard.

The door presently opened, and in came a man, herculean in build, probably in his late fifties and wearing a frayed army overcoat which had insignia on the sleeve. He stood for a moment blinking timidly in the electric light; then Peter Roth came forward and the two men shook hands, fervently and without a word.

Steve was then shown to an inner room, where he knelt for a moment at the bier of his sister-in-law. The two men came away together, and Steve remarked, "Well, she's better off than we are."

"Let me take your coat," said Peter. So Steve gave Peter his army overcoat, frayed and ostensibly (to figure from the time of the World War) in its twentieth year of wear, and Peter bore it away. But the nether-garb disclosed on Steve was also frayed and shabby; and suddenly Steve went to the basement stairway and there descended.

The basement proper was filled with men, while in the furnace room, seated on blocks of firewood, were four others, the remnants of a larger group which had formed there earlier in the evening in overflow from the crowd. Steve peered into this furnace room, then entered and likewise seated himself on a block of wood. Two of the four men were doing the talking, the other two listening.

"The budget this year," said one of the talkers, who held a cigar stub fiercely between his teeth, "is a billion dollars short!" He held the cigar stub exactly in the center of his mouth and his voice issued from all around it in a sort of amphoric or humming effect, much as if a small boy was blowing into an empty bottle.

"A billion short?" exclaimed the second talker, with an incredulous air.

"A billion short!" repeated the first talker. "And that's a lot of money Joe!" he added, turning to one of the listeners.

"Yes, it is!" agreed the man addressed as Joe; "you bet it is! Yes sir!"

"It's all politics!" the first talker went on. "And as far as I'm concerned, I can't keep politics on the stomach!"

"No, you can't!" said Joe; "you can't do it! No sir. Nope."

"Well," said the second talker, "whether the times get worse or better, I paid the last of my rent yesterday, and now I've got the landlord off my mind for a while, anyway."

"Yes, you have!" said Joe, "you certainly have! Yes sir! Yump. Yump." Joe Weiser was a man who agreed to anything and everything, and as such was an innocent claquer who was always inwardly welcomed by all hands at threshers' meetings, elevator meetings, creamery meetings, cooperative shipping association meetings, and the like.

"I read the other day about what a big thinker said," hummed the man with the cigar stub clenched fiercely in the exact center of his mouth, "and he says, says this big thinker, that what the democrats are trying to do is milk the treasury dry and then whack it over the back with the milk-stool!"

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"He's right!" said Joe, "you bet he's right! Don't you think he's right, Emil?" he added, turning to the second listener. But the second listener, as before, merely blinked in silence, being apparently worthless even as a corroborator.

"Rosary!" announced some one at the doorway, at which the five men rose from their blocks of furnace wood and went upstairs.

The rooms ahead were already filled with kneeling figures, so they themselves knelt on the kitchen floor, and from there followed recitation of the Five Joyful Mysteries, led by some unseen person in another room. The devotion completed, the five men returned to the furnace room and to the blocks of cottonwood.

The two talkative ones at once resumed their discourse, and were presently joined by Steve who, seemingly less conscious of his shabby clothes, began to relax and show some signs of life. The men could hear, directly above them, the measured tolling of the kitchen clock. At midnight a lunch was served, and later, at intervals, the group was called upstairs for the Five Sorrowful and the Five Glorious Mysteries. The person who led the rosary was, as before, unseen, and had by this time acquired something of a celestial air.

AT EARLY dawn, Steve got his overcoat and went outdoors. The pools that had formed in the fields during the thaw of the day preceding were now frozen over and gleamed under the eastern glow. The countryside itself lay as though just freshly washed. It would be a good day for the funeral.

People began arriving at the farmhouse at an early hour, many bringing parcels of food for the dinner which was to follow the funeral. At half-past nine it was time to leave for the church; and Peter Roth, the bereaved husband, wept uncontrollably as the casket was being borne from the home. Outside a woman slipped and fell, whereupon some one hurriedly sprinkled ashes on the icy walks. A light wind caught the ash dust and blew it upon the mourners.

At the church a Solemn Requiem Mass was sung. The church was crowded: many were old folks who, when the services were ended, moved slowly and carefully on rubber footing and with the aid of canes over the slippery walks, at the same time exchanging greetings, in English and in German, with acquaintances whom they often did not see in months or years.

"The only time we ever get to see each other is at a funeral."

"Nun, wie gehts sonst?"

"O, so langsam und deutlich, Danke."

They laid Ottilia Roth to rest in a newly purchased family plot, she the first to occupy it, and then her people set out, according to the custom thereabouts, for the dinner at the Roth home. In the fields the largest snowdrifts of the winter, now melted down until the dust-content blacked and streaked them, lay against the slopes like the skeletons of prehistoric monsters.

The dinner was a large affair. Over a hundred persons were served. And of these all save one were from Ottilia's side. It was Steve, Peter's brother from South Dakota, who provided the lone exception. Steve ate at the first table, together with Peter and the children. After dinner the brothers sat in an inner room and talked for a long time. And only once did Peter Roth falter, and that was when he said, "This dinner reminds me of our wedding dinner, fifty-two years ago!"

Evening fell, and Peter said, "Steve, you surely need not start for home tonight. Can't you wait till morning?"

But Steve shook his head. "I'd rather be on my way. If it should storm, I might be marooned here for weeks. And my car runs better at night."

Darkness had fallen when Steve was ready to set out for home. Peter walked with him to the car, and there shook his hand and bade him goodbye. It was an old car, a coupe, with an extra carburetor lying on the ledge back of the seat.

And then suddenly Peter clasped Steve's shoulders and said, "Steve, I'm so glad you came! You were the only one of my people—" and here Peter broke down and wept.

"Oh, that's all right," said Steve consolingly. "I only wish I could have afforded to bring my whole family. But you know, Peter, I haven't had a crop in seven years! It's drought, and if it isn't drought it's grasshoppers. And you can't do much, you know, when you can't get a crop. I work hard, but it doesn't seem to do much good. You know," and here his voice rose, "it's difficult to get ahead when you do get a crop, but when you have no crop at all, why then, you're just up against it. I tell you, Peter, not to get a crop one year after the other—that isn't right! that isn't right! You're not getting a fair shake—I have to make hay from thistles—I don't understand—" and here Steve in turn broke down and began to weep.

"Now, there!" said Peter, who had recovered himself; "don't worry—things will have to change some time."

"But they don't change!" cried Steve, and his broad shoulders shook as he sobbed like a child. "It's not right when you can't get a crop!—it's not right! it's not right! it isn't fair!"

He recovered himself at last, squared his shoulders, then climbed into his old car and was gone. Peter stood in the yard and watched him go; and when the car had mounted to the brow of a distant rise there was a backfire of the motor that threw out a shawl of sparks. Then the car disappeared below the hill, and only the stars above remained.

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Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

IN THE current number of the *New Republic* there is published an open letter to Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen by Ernest Sutherland Bates which is of great interest to all Catholics who cooperate, or who are willing to cooperate with their fellow Americans in upholding the American system of religious liberty, and the separation of Church and State, but who find serious difficulties in the way of such cooperation, especially when trying to work together with those who claim to be "liberals." So far as the questions and inferences raised by Mr. Bates are personal to Monsignor Sheen, the latter will, of course, if he sees fit, deal with them in his own way, and is thoroughly competent to do so to the satisfaction of reasonable people. But Mr. Bates does not merely challenge Monsignor Sheen to answer his principal question—or, rather, to make answer to his main, and highly serious, accusation. He also includes in his charges—or, at any rate, his "unpleasant suspicion" (that phrase is justly used in more than one sense!)—that not only Monsignor Sheen but other American Catholics are hypocrites and liars. Therefore, since Mr. Bates broadcasts such sweeping allegations, his questions, and still more, his ambiguous attitude, are of concern to others than Monsignor Sheen.

Mr. Bates writes: "Put very bluntly—but this is a time for plain speaking—what liberal Protestants insist upon knowing is whether some of our professedly liberal Catholic friends, including yourself, give more than lip-service to the American principle of the separation of Church and State (which is also an accepted principle in the Loyalist Spanish Republic). The unpleasant suspicion will not down that some of them—by no means all—support it only as a strategic measure when they are in a minority and that they really mean by 'religious liberty' liberty for no one but Catholics. In other words, that their—and your—liberalism is a matter of policy, not of conviction. How otherwise explain your attack on Nazi-Fascism in Germany and Italy where it is opposed to the Church and your defense of the same Nazi-Fascism when it happens to favor the Church?"

Before reaching the point where he thus expressed his decidedly "unpleasant" suspicion, which he voices not only individually, but also on behalf of "liberal Protestants" collectively (though by what warrants he makes himself their spokesman he does not state), Mr. Bates has built up the position from which he speaks by laying down premises which obviously he considers to be self-evident, and unassailable; but which, it seems to me, are nothing of the sort. Thus, he begins by saying that his chief reason for addressing his letter to Monsignor Sheen is that "there is no one who has occupied more deservedly than yourself a high place among the leaders of liberal Catholic thought in America." And at the end of his first long paragraph, after saying that he with "hundreds of other American liberals have been profoundly shocked by your recent emphatic stand in support of the anti-liberal, anti-democratic and anti-American régime of General Franco in Spain," Mr. Bates again claims Monsignor Sheen to have been an "American liberal," though now a "bed-fellow" of the Nazi-Fascists of Spain. Then, as in the passage quoted above, in which Mr. Bates formulates his "unpleasant suspicion," he proceeds to link other Catholics with Monsignor Sheen, as "some of our professedly liberal Catholic friends."

Now, as I have already said, Monsignor Sheen is well able to speak for himself, but as one who has read pretty nearly everything he has written, including his recent addresses on the Spanish situation, I wonder where and when Monsignor Sheen has ever labeled himself, as thinker, writer, speaker or voter, with that vague and practically undefinable term, "liberal"? As a theologian, of course, in which "liberalism" in religious thought and action bears highly specific and scientifically designed meaning, Monsignor Sheen would hardly be likely to profess "liberalism." The term as used in political thinking—as applied, for example, in England, to a definite party, or in this country, to branches of several parties which profess economic or sociological theories of reform short of Socialism—should not be tainted with whatever odium attaches to it in theology; and Catholics, of course, may, and many of them do, embrace "liberalism" in such matters, as it is their right, and they duty in conscience to do, if they think such "liberal" policies right and just.

But unfortunately there are many Americans who claim to be "liberals" to whom "liberalism" connotes an amorphous mass (sometimes a very messy mass) of all sorts of supposedly "liberal" and "democratic" and "progressive" ideas, and theories and doctrines, and moods, especially moods; some of them being very sensible, and good and desirable, as judged by Catholics; others again being decidedly dubious, while still others are highly objectionable, poisonous, suicidal to a truly civilized society. Such "liberals," for example, may and do claim Catholics as fellow liberals, because the latter stand with them in certain definite matters, such as economic and social reform; but if the same Catholics refuse to agree with these "liberals" in such matters as divorce, or birth control, or euthanasia—or, as in the present Spanish controversy, refuse to accept the thesis proclaimed by the liberals of Mr. Bates's persuasion as if it were dogma infallibly defined as being of the very essence of the "liberal" faith, that the Spanish Loyalist government is a truly democratic régime honestly devoted to the same principles and practise of religious liberty, and the separation of Church and State that prevail in the United States—why, then, it would seem, such American Catholics must rest under the "unpleasant" (I would say, the morbid) suspicion of Mr. Bates and his colleagues.

Until Mr. Bates—and the *New Republic,* and the *Nation,* and other spokesmen for "liberalism"—can offer some more reasonable criterion by which to judge the honesty or the lack of honesty of American Catholics in their attitude toward religious liberty, than this question-begging term, I think that American Catholics must be patient, and not retort in kind to such disagreeable insinuations as Mr. Bates brings against us. Reasonable Catholics

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would not and do not say that American "liberals" who support the Spanish Loyalists are all allied with the Communists and Anarchists, and at heart are dishonest in their "lip-service" to democracy and religious liberty. Charges of that character are usually explosions of emotion, excusable of course, but not helpful to a discussion in which reason should control even righteous emotion.

Communications

AGRARIANISM

Scotch Plains, N. J.

TO the Editors: Henry Tetlow's "Who Said 'Eheu Fugaces'?" in your issue of January 6 calls for a reply, if only a belated one. . . .

Let us summarize Mr. Tetlow's points in favor of the mail order house:

(1) The mail order house supposedly supplanted the monopoly of the small local merchant (who, according to A. A. Berle, was a pretty rugged, rugged individualist) with a low-price competition of benefit to the consumer.

(2) The mail order house supplied "expert specification" of goods in its catalogue as opposed to exaggerated verbal claims of the human salesman.

(3) The mail order house supplied a convenience in ordering and delivering through the mail.

(4) The competition of the mail order house has made such retailers as are left toe the mark in regard to prices.

These four points assumedly add up to a greater consumer benefit which can be laid at the door of the mail order house, and therefore the mail order house is a desirable thing. Let us see if this be so.

(1) It is rather unfair to picture the village store, the village blacksmith, the village grist mill, etc., as monopolies. Inasmuch as the small village could not be presumed to support more than one of each, the word "monopoly" carries rather a wrong connotation. These enterprises were more in the nature of village services which needed no more than one servitor. Neighbors dealt with neighbors, and I have a feeling that the social pressure of the village was almost enough of a check on avarice and unfair dealing to make such practises (or vices) rare. Mr. Berle may be a grand arm-chair economist and statistician, but there is more to a village economy than economics and statistics. Village enterprises of the sort mentioned not only supplied goods to the villagers, but, equally as important, credit and a place to barter. You have only to inquire of old rural residents in non-metropolitan areas to find out to what extent these extra services were supplied, and of what importance they were. Debt was often paid off in kind, and since credit and trade was local, the ups and downs of national finance-capitalism had but little effect on the subsistence-homestead type of farmer. And there were many such.

The mail order house with its cash sales and cash credits served rather to bring the rural resident into the urban finance economy. Money was spent largely outside the confines of the local area, and in destroying the trade of the local craftsmen and suppliers, the mail order house tended (and tends) to throw the rural economy into the hands of urban financiers, and the industrial system. That this is to be regretted and avoided where possible, no agrarian should deny.

So far as the comparative prices of mail order house and local merchants go, it must be realized that no true comparison of prices can be made without taking into consideration the exchange values in the particular local economy, and the sort and quality of goods sold at the comparative prices. Mass distribution and mass production go together, and the general tendency of both has been to lower quality considerably!

(2) On the score of expert specification vs. exaggerated claims of the human salesman, the following should show that the point is a draw where it is not in favor of the human salesman. Mr. Tetlow admits the mail order catalogue may "put the best foot forward." It does, and more, it often misleads buyers in those subtle ways so common to advertisers. "Guaranteed for six months" more often means that the goods will last only six months than that the company is right behind the object. And, on reading the small type on the guarantee (a practise for which Americans are not noted), one usually finds that instead of replacing a faulty object, the mail order house will allow a certain percentage of the value, depending on the length of the period of use, on the purchase of another like object.

Veracity?

On the side of the human salesman doing a local business in his own village there is this to be said: he won't last very long if he consistently misrepresents his goods. And add to that the fact that he is dealing with his neighbors whose needs he understands, and it seems to me you have more of a chance of good service than from an impersonal corporation selling only such merchandise as it can handle at a profit. From my own experience I know that there are a number of objects on the shelves of the village general store which are handled almost solely for the convenience of the customer, with profit a secondary motive. And the store suffers no competition on the part of the mail order house in such items!

(3) Since the average villager has to go to his store anyway for groceries, etc., it seems no great added handicap to make purchases of such things as the mail order houses sell at the same time. Again, most general stores have a delivery system, or a neighbor can be pressed into service. In any case, the object wanted can be obtained the same day from the local store or craftsman, whereas it will take several days at least for an order to reach the mail order house and be filled and returned by mail.

(4) As to the beneficial effects of the competition of the mail order house, would it not be quite as legitimate to credit lowered prices, etc., to the whole national merchandising system as it is to credit it to the mail order house? Without cheap transportation, subsidized parcel post, and the general competition on price levels, where would the mail order house find its cheap merchandise to sell cheaply? Mr. Tetlow admits that its price margin can usually, if not always be equaled by the small man due to the latter's lower overhead, etc. Is there any superior morality among

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huge mail order houses which would cause them to give the customer the break before the local merchant would? If there is, I, at least, have never heard of it. Big impersonal corporations are more amoral than moral, if the facts unearthed by big business critics, etc., are not fantasies.

Under ideal circumstances (that is to say, where there is a sufficient number of "home-use farming" customers who believe in an independent local economy) the small storekeeper and craftsman can serve their local trade more intelligently and more satisfactorily than a huge national impersonal corporation ever can. They are individuals serving individual needs. At best the mail order house can offer a product suited to a type of need, and leave it to the customer to get along with the product as well as he can. Mass-production means mass-distribution means standardization means satisfaction of a standard need. But there ain't no such critter! Standard fit clothes need a tuck here and a seam let out there, to fit most of us. And most standard shoes need "breaking in," for all the salesman's efforts to give us a size larger. And there are many things which can't be altered to suit, and will never, therefore be fully useful. Why not support the enterprises which are geared to suit our individual needs, then, as it will be cheaper and better in the long run? That which only partly suits is half-value, no matter how low its price, and no matter how mathematically efficient the system which labored to bring it forth.

THOMAS BARRY.

Notre Dame, Ind.

TO the Editors: Last year at the Western Electric factory in Chicago, where most of the telephones in the world are made, excursions were held so that the several thousand employees and their families could go through the giant factory and see just how a telephone is made. Even those who had been working there for many years were "simply amazed" at how other divisions of the factory operated.

I was not surprised when the Chicago *Tribune* solemnly praised the wisdom of this novel idea. (Oh the brilliance of the mind who conceived that people might actually be interested in knowing what they were making!) I only grunted when a popular magazine dedicated to lauding the cult of Progress commented enthusiastically on the scheme. But I was taken aback when THE COMMONWEAL editorial ("Toward Industrial Democracy," pages 369-370) gravely listed it as a nice gesture to stimulate the workers' creative interest. That's quite all right, but—

Does no one see the irony of the report? Isn't anyone amazed at the spectacle of thousands of adult workers crowding through the factory where they have been working for years, eager as kids at their first circus, to see just what in the world they have been making all this time? To what limits must specialization go in the name of Progress before anyone starts to laugh?

How I wish G. K. Chesterton were still among us—what a rollicking poem he would have written! Convinced that G.K. will rest uneasy in heaven unless someone attempts to commemorate the event, I have managed a verse.

Oh bees of the field who gather the honey,
Oh horses and mules who plod ahead
To harrow the soil that wheat may grow,
You are the ones who make certain our bread.
So come watch the wheels of the flour cavalcade—
Take a vacation and see how it's made.

And militant Communists who take the stand
To get us to shake the outstretched hand,
Don't give up hope: you have an ace,
But absence of facts weakens your case.
Stalin is leading the liberal crusade—
Take a vacation and see how it's made.

Oh poets and preachers of blazes in Hades,
We don't take to your stuff very well.
Our troubles on earth are so many
We pass over your descriptions of Hell.
So here's a tip to help you persuade—
Take a vacation and see how it's made.

These things I dreamed
And I thought them good sense,
Until a big-hearted capitalist
Infused new eloquence:

Oh faithful employees, dear to me all—
Even you who stamp "O" on the dial—
Your touching zeal deserves a reward,
So let up on your work for a while.
Pass through *our* factory, zone by zone,
And observe how *we* make a telephone.
Yea, have the day off, and still be paid!
Take a vacation and see how it's made.

EMERSON HYNES.

Springfield, Mass.

TO the Editors: It seems to me that the American people in general have not faced the facts regarding the present serious unemployment problem. There has been a lot of wishing and hoping that increased business and perhaps new industries would at some time reemploy a good part of the millions now receiving public aid directly or indirectly, but the situation has yet to be faced squarely by most of our influential citizens.

The facts are that for millions of able-bodied workers there is no place and no future in industry or commerce. The heavy loss in foreign trade, the migration of many industries, and the displacement of men by improved machinery have brought about this condition, and it is a pity that so few people realize this or are willing to admit it.

What is the sensible and the charitable thing to do in such a case? *Place people back on the land.* If this had been done five or six years ago, instead of giving them disguised doles, the situation today would be far different.

Let us take a concrete case. Suppose that back in 1933 a family on relief had been provided with twenty-five or thirty acres of land with a little house, barn, tools, and a few animals, at a cost of, say, $4,000. Today that family would be comparatively well off and with a real future

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before it. Let us now consider the family existing on the income from WPA or similar made work. For the same period the cost to the taxpayers has been not less than $3,500, and what can that family look forward to except the same pittance, which is inadequate for a decent American standard of living, to say nothing of the moral aspect.

A short time ago I had a talk with a local teacher about the thousands of school graduates without jobs, and he agreed that there is an urgent need for clear thinking on education. Education for what? Education for life implies the preparation to engage in that work which God intended for each one on this earth. At present it appears that for most young people in this country it is education for idleness, WPA work, or jack-of-all-trades.

What a sad thing it is to see so many young men drifting and thinking, thinking about that familiar slogan, "America, the land of opportunity!"

When will educators, legislators, businessmen, clergymen, editors, and taxpayers both big and little, face the facts? It is high time they did.

RICHARD LENZI.

WELSH NATIONALISM

Elmira, N. Y.

TO the Editors: "Welsh Nationalism," by Donald Attwater, in your issue of January 27, has been intensely interesting to at least one of your readers; and I hope—what the writer seems to promise—he will tell us more about the prospects of Catholicism in the principality. The article recalls two incidents in my past:

(1) When I was a student at the University of Innsbruck, the late Monsignor Nugent, founder of the *Catholic Times,* called there on his way to Rome. I showed him around the old city. Thereafter I was always his guest at Bootle when passing through England on my way to the Continent. Speaking of Wales one day he said: "Had we been able to send priests into Wales fifty years sooner, we might have been able to bring a majority of the people back into the Church. A great many Catholic customs, and even doctrines, had survived, among them: the use of holy water, pilgrimages to shrines and 'Holy Wells,' intercession of the saints, prayers for the dead, etc. And they hated Anglicanism. But the Wesleyans got in before us."

(2) I remember reading a speech of Lloyd George when he was piloting the Welsh Disestablishment Bill through the Commons. He said: "The Welsh people never submitted willingly to the jurisdiction of Canterbury. They constantly protested against it. Before the Reformation they appealed repeatedly to Rome against the claims and encroachment of Canterbury." And—what is very remarkable, because Lloyd George is distinctly anti-Catholic—he added: "The Roman Catholic religion died out among the Welsh people only when it became impossible to supply them with Roman Catholic priests."

REV. OWEN B. MCGUIRE.

Points & Lines

Surpluses and Misery

DESPITE various AAA restrictions the American harvest for 1938 compared favorably in bulk with that of other recent years, and farm prices are depressed as a result. According to the *Agricultural Situation,* published monthly by the Department of Agriculture:

> Nearly 342,000,000 acres of 45 crops were harvested in 1938. This compares with 341,000,000 acres in 1937, and with 343,000,000 acres average for the 10 years 1927-36. The average for the pre-drought years 1923-32 was 354,000,000 acres. Principal changes in the acreage harvested in 1938 as compared with 1937 were decreases of about 9,000,000 acres of cotton and 2,000,000 acres of corn, and increases of about 6,000,000 acres of wheat, about 2,000,000 acres of hay and about 1,400,000 acres of clover seed. . . . Crop yields in 1938 averaged about 5 percent less than in 1937, the year of highest outturn, but were fully 6 percent higher than in any season since 1920.

Large carry-overs from previous years combined with these good crops to lower commodity prices and increase agricultural discontent. Although the "Farm Bureau nationally is standing squarely behind the AAA and its crop adjustment program," the other two major farm organizations want drastic changes. The *Farmer* of St. Paul, Minnesota, says editorially:

> The opposition to the AAA that has come out into the open during the past few weeks is aiming its guns on production control. The opposition of the Grange and the Farmers' Union to control is not new, as both organizations have been shy of it all along. But their opposition coupled with an undercurrent in favor of price fixing is at this time giving comfort and aid to the AAA opponents in Congress. Some of the opposition comes from sincere persons who feel they have a better program than the AAA; some from AAA haters who despise it on general principles; some from politicians who see a chance to get into the limelight and probably feather their nest for the future. The fact that production control is singled out for attack by every opposing group indicates that this is the weak spot in the AAA and the spot where a knockout blow can be the most effective.

The efforts of the administration to increase domestic consumption of foodstuffs were focused on the National-American Wholesale Grocers Association meeting in Chicago, where processors and distributors listened to the pleas of Jesse W. Tapp, retiring president of the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation, for lower profit margins. The results were recorded in *Business Week:*

> At the end of the week's conventions with the problem still no nearer a tangible solution, food men were inclined to wonder if the "new type of distribution" might not take form gradually—for example, by adding potatoes to milk, and citrus fruits to potatoes, etc.? Might not there eventually grow up in New York and elsewhere a network of depots through which surplus foods of all kinds could be moved direct to properly qualified consumers under municipal, state or federal regulation, but with private business earning a private profit on the operation, and meanwhile protecting its present price structure by preserving to itself those customers who could pay its prices? There wasn't

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any certain answer to these questions, but a few big food men discussed the matter privately during the conventions and concluded that the answer was probably "Yes."

More data on this scheme is supplied by T. R. B. in the *New Republic:*

> The Department of Agriculture is endeavoring to persuade the authorities of large cities to establish fixed distribution points where, in the early morning hours, families can buy milk at eight cents a quart. . . . Another sub-program consists of an attempt to reduce distribution costs of certain commodities when temporary surpluses appear. Here again no subsidy is given. . . . The two remaining sub-programs involve federal subsidies, and constitute genuine domestic dumping. Both are still in the discussion stage. It is proposed to provide midday meals throughout the big-city public-school systems. . . . It is also proposed to have Surgeon-General Parran, on the basis of recent surveys by his bureau of Public Health Service, designate regional areas of widespread malnutrition and within these areas distribute food, either free, or at special prices, to low-income families.

From the farmers' point of view the most depressed crop of all is cotton. The situation is as outlined in *Business Week:*

> In 1937 . . . the United States produced its all time record crop of nearly 19,000,000 bales and the world consumed only 11,000,000 bales of American cotton. . . . In 1938 . . . production was 12,000,000 bales, of which the world won't consume even 11,000,000 in the current crop year. . . . It looks like the poorest year in modern times for American cotton exports, only 2,250,000 bales having been shipped so far with 3,850,000 in the like period a year ago (and last season's exports weren't anything to crow over). . . . More specifically than any other crop the United States has been holding the umbrella over foreign cotton. This fostered the rise in foreign production of about 35 percent between 1930 and 1937. In view of the long-time averages, it's a cinch the United States would seek a 5,000,000 to 6,000,000 bale slice of the export market in any cartel agreement. Pending such an export arrangement the cotton states are asking further federal handouts of $400,000,000 to $500,000,000 a year to give the South parity income. Some people say the surplus should be burned. Others would give it back to farmers who would voluntarily curtail crops correspondingly. But Washington sees no feasible plan but world cooperation.

The combination of curtailed demand and markedly increasing farm mechanization has heightened considerably the difficulties of the tenant farmers, or sharecroppers, who grow so much of the crop. The dramatic protest of the evicted sharecroppers in southern Missouri has centered national attention on the plight of these unfortunates generally, although many of the demonstrators themselves are said to be living now in the flimsiest of shacks and trying to cut and sell enough wood from the swamps to keep alive for the next three months. A large proportion of them are Negroes. The *Christian Century* summarizes the salient points of the sharecropper system:

> Most of the southeast Missouri sharecroppers are like those to be found in a number of other Southern States. They own practically nothing except their labor. The sharecropper looks to his boss for everything he gets. He "makes" a cotton crop, harvests it, and delivers it to the gin, and in most cases is supposed to receive half of the profit from the crop after certain deductions are made. The landlord furnishes the land, the tools, seed, a team and its feed, and a shack in which the sharecropper and his family live. Out of the sharecropper's 50 percent are deducted the expense of the picking if additional help is hired, the "furnish" or food for the tenant and his family, and any articles of rough clothing, such as overalls, which the sharecropper may buy. As to the "furnish" the boss determines the extent to which purchases may be made, and the sharecropper goes to the store of the boss or to another store designated by him. Accounts are kept by the boss and settlement is made at the end of the season. This type of sharecropper has no written agreement with the landlord. His tenancy may be terminated at any time, and the word of the boss is law in this matter.

On eviction the sharecropper can only hire out as a day laborer at $.75 a day; the maximum employment is 120 days a year. The administration appears more aware than ever of these difficulties and is beginning to explore one exceedingly hopeful possibility. According to the New York *Times:*

> The Farm Security Administration, enjoined with the job of solving the problem, has an almost insurmountable task. It is attempting to make rehabilitation loans to likely prospects to set them up in farming in a small way, where land is available, but there is not nearly enough land to go around. To other families it is making outright grants which are reported to be $2 a person a month in this immediate section. According to a member of the FSA staff, the philosophy of the FSA is toward the family-size farm operated with a minimum of outside labor and going into mechanization only in a limited way. . . . Some students believe that a readjustment in the picture of what constitutes a farm—the land operated as a self-contained family unit rather than as a commercial enterprise—eventually may be the solution.

After Barcelona

AMERICAN newspapers and reviews have hardly considered how the fall of Barcelona will affect Spain itself. That the triumph of Franco in Catalonia means the triumph of the Nationalists in the war is generally recognized, but the question most pressingly asked is not how this will affect Spain, but how it will affect the relations between Italy and France and Germany and England. Concerning the victory of the Nationalists, the *Christian Science Monitor* says:

> Now Franco's fascistic armies have taken Barcelona, and all the great capitals of the world appear to feel that the end has really come at last.

The New York *Sun:*

> Assuming for Franco the superiority in equipment and mobile force his victory in Catalonia implies, the rest should be largely a matter of mopping up.

Vincent Sheean reports to the New York *Times* the collapse of the Loyalists. This report is rather full and tells of the failure of morale as well as of the military forces:

> In previous retreats in Spain, one has been aware that the disaster was supported by an undefeated spirit. Now that spirit is no more. There is no use trying to recall the epic days of Madrid or otherwise attempting to becloud the finality of the present catastrophe for the government. As an extremely sympathetic observer, who has never hitherto mentioned defeat, I tell the plain truth, which is that this disaster is irreparable. . . . It is not at all impossible that the military authorities may themselves take the initiative and negotiate an armistice. . . . It is all over now, and those who have most admired the courage and pride of the republic must hope only that the survivors will obtain mercy from the Fascists.

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In the *Herald Tribune,* Sonia Tomara reports:

> Guerilla warfare is likely to continue for some time. There may be sporadic uprisings here and there. But Gen. Miaja's defense of central Spain is likely to be difficult because he lacks equipment.

America, the Catholic weekly, comments:

> The game is up and Barcelona knows it. . . . Yet, with diabolical intent these [Barcelona-Valencia] leaders, long since convinced that their cause was hopeless, are seeking by all manner of means, principally pernicious, to prolong the uneven contest. What other possible purpose could it be but to leave Spain bankrupt and desolate?

The *Echo* of Buffalo, Catholic paper, suggests:

> The "Loyalists" hope against hope that their fight will not be futile—that the situation in Europe may change, that the United States may revise the Neutrality Law and send food to them—that General Franco's movement may yet weaken from within and his followers grow weary of war. Meanwhile, many in France and Britain have many misgivings. The French Cabinet doubts that Mussolini will quickly withdraw from Majorca even when the war is over, especially since the Italian press talks as if war with France were only a matter of time. Some of the French suggest that a naval demonstration may be necessary to persuade Mussolini to evacuate Spain.

This quotation brings up the central subject for the editorial comment that has accompanied the fall of Catalonia. Anne O'Hare McCormick writes from Rome:

> It is clear now that the day Generalissimo Francisco Franco's forces command the Pyrenees frontier is pay day for Premier Benito Mussolini. This is why he has steadily refused to define his claims against France until this day. This is why he told Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain in Rome that the dispute could not be discussed until the Spanish situation was clear. . . . It is not greatly feared that Italy and Germany will retain a physical foothold on the peninsula. Experience with the Spaniards has taught their unpopular allies that a Fascist Spain would be as supernationalistic as Germany or Italy. . . . For, if Franco wins and restores the monarchy, as is predicted, it stands to reason that the Spanish government will have something to say to any French project of occupying Spanish territory to fight Italy and likewise to any Fascist project of using Spain to fight France. But this aspect of the situation, hitherto disregarded, is being introduced into the picture by the Spaniards themselves.

This fairly moderate position or prediction is backed up by *America:*

> Time and again the Nationalist Government, as well as its *Caudillo,* Francisco Franco, has pledged itself that not one foot of Spanish soil, not one Spanish right or privilege will be sacrificed to any foreigner, whether Russian, German or Italian, and Spain's people will see to it, with their life's blood, that the pledge of her leaders is kept and her honor preserved.

Those writers who have been whole-heartedly partizan to the Loyalists and completely antagonistic to the Nationalists during the course of the war, now deny this viewpoint, and find only reasons to believe that Italy and Germany will stay in the peninsula and use it in pursuing further aggression. In the first place, they assume that Franco's government, as the quotations above indicate, is utterly Fascist and utterly wedded to Fascism and Nazism. Then, they cannot see how Franco would have the power of opposing any plans which Hitler and Mussolini might formulate for him to follow. Fortunately, they have not been good prophets during the war. The conservative Baltimore *Sun,* never rabidly Loyalist, editorializes:

> The best proof that the deterioration of Europe has not been checked but has speeded up is to be found in Spain. For no matter what view is taken of the nature of the forces opposed in Spain, it is incontestable that the outcome represents another victory for the dictators and especially for the Italian Fascists. Mussolini has publicly celebrated the fall of Barcelona as if it were an Italian triumph; Franco has publicly thanked the Duce for the aid of the Italian troops. . . . London and Paris seem destined, then, to face anew the same emergency that confronted them last autumn. . . . It is nearly time for the real stroke to be delivered.

The *New Republic* views the matter in utter black:

> Both Germany and Italy are in Spain to stay, if Franco wins. If Mussolini does not then renew his demands on France it will only be to give Hitler time to strike in the Ukraine. Within a few months at most, France must either yield much territory to Italy or be prepared to fight. By permitting Franco to win, France will have weakened herself strategically so much that, for the first time, the outcome of such a war would be in serious doubt.

The *Christian Century* gives its summary:

> There is, of course, the appalling chance that before the Fascist powers can gather the fruit of their victory in Spain the struggle there will be merged in a general European war. That possibility apart, the triumph of the totalitarian allies in Spain introduces a fundamental change in the whole European situation. It puts France between the jaws of the nutcracker and Great Britain out on a limb. . . . It does not require sovereignty in order to have aviation fields, naval bases, ammunition dumps, munitions depots, military headquarters, under concession from a friendly, grateful and in any case helpless Spanish government. There is no good reason to doubt that Italy will have all these things in Spain, or as many of them as seem advantageous in pressing her claim for the fulfilment of her "natural aspirations" at the expense of France.

In the face of all these threats, "Pertinax" suggests in the *Chicago Daily News* that France might take action:

> While Paris military authorities do not consider that the occupation of the Balearic island of Minorca would make more secure the sea routes between the French metropolis and northern Africa (the island would be, like Gibraltar, at the mercy of the power to which air bases would be available in the Spanish peninsula), there are many indications that they may recommend at any time that action should be taken in Spanish Morocco, in order to free the Atlantic lines of communications between Casablanca and Bordeaux and to provide the British, in Ceuta, with a substitute for Gibraltar, which is not any more to be regarded as in the position of lock and bolt for the western Mediterranean.

It is universally agreed that the most important consideration in resolving the crisis precipitated by the fall of Barcelona is the extent to which Hitler will back Mussolini up in his Mediterranean desires. Hitler's speech to the Reichstag did not indicate that extent.

The Brooklyn *Tablet,* Catholic diocesan weekly, considers the war all but over, and expresses this hope:

> In our own country, victory for the Nationalists will mean the end of the clamoring and shouting that have distracted and disturbed us in the working out of our own national problems. It will avert the most dangerous threat of becoming involved in foreign wars to which the United States has been exposed since our catastrophic experience in 1917. It will eliminate the source of confusion, disunion and misunderstanding that disrupts united Catholic action.

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The Stage & Screen

The American Way

TO DEMAND that a show planned to fill the spaces of one of the world's hugest theatres should have any subtlety of expression or should answer any world-shaking questions would be idiotic, and yet the latter at least is precisely what one of our popular columnists, Mr. Heywood Broun, has asserted George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart should have done in "The American Way." What Mr. Kaufman and Mr. Hart have done, and it is not small triumph that they have been able to do it, is to concoct a panorama of American life from the days of McKinley to the present time which has weight, variety and color enough to fill the Center Theatre with delighted audiences. "The American Way" tells the story of a German immigrant who rises to wealth and respect in his community, loses his son in the war, and his fortune later in attempting to support the bank of the man who had befriended him, is killed at a Nazi meeting, and finally is buried amid the tears of his townspeople. It tells the story very simply and perhaps naively, but it tells it with a wealth of sympathy, and in the early scenes with nostalgic longing. The ideal of "The American Way" is the ideal of the America of Lincoln, though not of Mr. Browder or Mr. Fritz Kuhn—perhaps also not that of Mr. Heywood Broun. It is a sentimental America certainly, an America that never could completely exist except in the ideals of its lovers, but enough of it did exist and still exists to make us willing to live for it and if need be die for it. The response of the great audiences which have greeted it has proved that it is an ideal far more vital than Mr. Broun perhaps might wish, an ideal which is still ours and which the example of Germany and Russia has certainly strengthened in our hearts.

The first act is the most effective, for Messrs. Kaufman and Hart are best in their sentimental scenes, the scenes in which they survey their youth. The final Nazi scene does not seem important enough to life in America to bear the weight that is given to it. But every scene is magnificently staged, and the acting of Fredric March and Florence Eldridge as the German and his wife are two of the finest performances the season has witnessed, certainly the finest things that either of these artists has ever accomplished. But the whole company of 250 persons support the principals splendidly. "The American Way," if not an epoch-making work, is one so heart-warming that it must be seen. (At the Center Theatre.)

Set to Music

WITHOUT Miss Beatrice Lillie and Mr. Richard Haydn, Noel Coward's review would be distinctly on the dull side. Most of the music is undistinguished, and when it isn't it has been heard before, and the book is, except for the scene of the society entertainment, pretty banal. But Miss Lillie is gorgeous and makes trivial and dull material seem brilliant, and Mr. Haydn in his "Fish Mimicry" number, which he wrote himself, makes us wish he had written the whole show. He is moreover a comedian who in pungency and variety is a worthy companion to Miss Lillie. (At the Music Box.) GRENVILLE VERNON.

"You're a better man than . . ."

SAM JAFFE is almost the forgotten man in the title rôle of "Gunga Din," as Cary Grant, Douglas Fairbanks, jr., and Victor McLaglen fight their way through Hindus, survive the cruelty of the Thuggee torture chamber and carry-on occasionally in the old Mack Sennett comedy manner when they playfully toss dynamite around and spike the punch with "Elephant Elixir." However, Din, whose heroics are not confined to water-carrying as in Kipling's poem, gets his big moment when the three hero-sergeants, bloody with wounds, are surrounded by Thugs, and Din, also bleeding profusely, climbs to the topmost pinnacle of the temple's gold tower and blows the alarm for the approaching Highlanders. It is incredible that any film on which $2,000,000 was reputedly spent, for which villages and a temple were built, which is authoritatively costumed, well cast and has thrilling battle scenes against beautiful mountain backgrounds, couldn't have spent some effort on an intelligent, adult story. But perhaps we are asking too much of a super-spectacle like "Gunga Din." Perhaps we should overlook the plot's inconsistencies, the glorification of war (which is to be expected in any film that is even suggested by a poem of the imperialistic Kipling), the ungentlemanly treatment of Joan Fontaine (who is forgotten because there's a fight going on somewhere), the ham acting of the villains, and the overly robust boyishness of the heroes. We are grateful for Jaffe's gentle, patient, underplayed Din, for Grant's cheery, Cockney sergeant, and for George Stevens's good direction especially in the magnificently sweeping mob scenes.

The failure of "Gunga Din" to give a semblance of reality is all the more marked when it is contrasted with another new historical film, "Die Grüne Hölle" ("The Green Hell"). This German picture with English subtitles tells the story of Henry Wickham, who sets out in 1876 to steal rubber seed from Brazil, which has a monopoly on rubber and will execute anyone endeavoring to export the seed. The calmness of the picture's start is broken effectively when the Englishman, without authority of his country, penetrates the rubber regions and encounters in vivid scenes of terrifying tensity the jungle's snakes, cats, crocodiles, savages and fevers. This film, noteworthy for its beautiful photography of Brazil and stark jungle realism, submerges in genuine movie values the propaganda one anticipates and can find.

The English picture, "School for Husbands," can't decide if it means to be ultra-sophisticated or satirically make fun of sophistication. Its risqué lines are just too, too smart and packed with *double entendre;* and the situations, when not reminiscent of the old De Mille bathtub school with wives running around in scanties, are like those in Elizabethan comedies that require cuckold husbands to be placated. Rex Harrison turns in a smooth performance as the philandering writer who gets material for his novels by giving husbands pointers in love. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Philosophy vs. Literature

By CHARLES DONAHUE

THE SEVEN essays in "Maule's Curse"[1] are connected by a thesis about the general intellectual development of America. The settlers of New England, so the thesis runs, brought with them minds formed in part by the "flexible and sensitive ethical scholarship of the Roman tradition." But, in theory at least, they had deserted this tradition when, as Calvinists, they denied the freedom of the will. Yet for many years Calvinism, illogically, stimulated the New England conscience. Gradually, however, combined with other forces, it destroyed the last vestiges of the Roman or, as Mr. Winters calls it elsewhere, the Roman Catholic and Anglo-Catholic tradition, and, hence, the intellectual basis for conduct. New England and consequently America—for New England was America's schoolmaster—lapsed into a denial of all objective ethical standards. Mr. Winters is concerned chiefly with the literary result of this denial, a tendency to produce a literature of unmotivated feeling which he calls obscurantism.

Obviously, there is much controversial matter in Mr. Winters's book. Even those in general agreement with the author on the unsoundness of much English and American literature since 1750 will find a great deal that will probably not meet their approval. Like other humanists, Mr. Winters has a tendency to oversimplify problems in the history of thought. The theological and philosophical background, which provides the thread of unity running through the essays, is sketchily presented. More passages from the Puritan divines and some from their Unitarian successors would have been welcome illustrations of the development in New England. The oversimplification is even more marked when Mr. Winters deals with the Catholic background. As recent studies in medieval thought have shown, such a phrase as "the Aristotelian ethical tradition embodied in the Catholic Church" can be misleading.

The humanists have in the main been men of literary training, and they are, in my opinion, inclined to overestimate the importance of literature as an active force in intellectual development. In the nineteenth century, to be sure, literary men felt it their duty to act as philosophers and even theologians. They not only recommended ideals in their works; they tried to create ideals. Wordsworth had a message for his age which he had thought up all by himself. Shelley could see no real distinction between philosophers and poets. Arnold was convinced that literature would take the place of religion. That this was an abnormal state of affairs a little reflection on the relation between ante and medieval thought or between Spenser and renaissance thought will show. Normally, the poet expresses the accepted philosophical or theological doctrine of his age. The abnormal condition in the nineteenth century was perhaps due to the breakdown of philosophy that occurred in England after Hume. When it seemed that professional philosophers could prove nothing, poets tried to supply their own philosophy. It is ironical that the humanists, who have so thoroughly repudiated the nineteenth century in other respects, should still be at times under its spell in this matter. Even when they deal with philosophical works, they tend to approach these works as literature. For them the humanistic tradition is primarily a literary tradition, handed down, interpreted and developed by men of letters rather than an independent theological and philosophical tradition which literature merely reflects. Of course, Mr. Winters recognizes the existence and importance of theological tradition. The attitude toward letters inherited by the humanists from the nineteenth century perhaps accounts for his not showing more appreciation of the complexities of that tradition in itself and in its relation to literature.

The humanist's failure to recognize the essential dependence of literature upon religious and philosophical thought is also a handicap when he comes to prescribe for contemporary letters. The modern poet, like all poets, has the rhetorician's *habitus*. He thinks in terms of expression rather than of thing expressed. His philosophy, even when as in the nineteenth century he attempts to form an original one, is ordinarily a conglomeration of elements he picks up from contemporary thinkers. If contemporary thought leads him to the conviction that the world is essentially unintelligible, he will express his vision of such a world in an art that is itself obscure. He can honestly do nothing else. If this art is criticized in terms of a philosophy he does not understand, he will be annoyed or complain that his freedom as an artist is being threatened. He can honestly produce a humanistic art only after his intellectual milieu has provided him with a knowledge of humanistic theology or at least of a complete humanistic philosophy. It may very well be that the best allies of a truly humanistic literary critic are Mr. Hutchins and the others who want to give American students the opportunity to get a real knowledge of such thinkers as Aristotle and Saint Thomas. Until their program has affected the climate of opinion in America profoundly, those who approach the problem of restoring the humanistic tradition as though it were primarily a literary problem will probably continue to be met with the incomprehension and hostility of which Mr. Winters complains in his Foreword.

Meanwhile, humanistic analysis of literature such as Mr. Winters offers in the present book is of great interest particularly to those who have some acquaintance with the type of thought upon which it ultimately depends. Such analysis calls attention to the intellectual as distinct from the emotional content of literature and thus provides the basis for a criticism which is something more than a search for apt adjectives. It makes intellectual poverty, where it exists, glaringly apparent. It is a necessary preliminary for a detailed consideration of the relation between literature and thought. The book is recommended with the confidence that those who read it will look forward to the further studies of American authors which Mr. Winters has announced.

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[1] Maule's Curse, by Yvor Winters. Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions. $3.00.

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Other Books of the Day

Contemporary Heroism

From Union Square to Rome, by Dorothy Day. Silver Spring, Maryland: The Preservation of the Faith Press. $1.50.

THE EDITOR of the *Catholic Worker* addresses this account of her religious history to her agnostic brother, but in the course of an admirable interpretation of the mind of Rome to that of Union Square she manages to give an insight into the point of view of Union Square that no religious sympathizer whether of Rome or not can afford to be without. It is not a complete or entirely typical interpretation in all probability, but it is nonetheless one with which we must reckon. We are not likely to err by overestimating the sincerity and generosity of forces which we so often encounter in their more destructive aspects. But we cannot afford to underestimate them, for as Dorothy Day constantly insists, the victory which we seek is not conquest but conversion.

To begin with, there are elements in the radical point of view that the religious mind must always find not only admirable but morally compelling. The love of the poor and the oppressed, the passion for justice, the devotion of all individual energy and capacity to the general good, the living beyond oneself in the common joy and grief—these are things to kindle any believer's heart. They are enduring goods not to be minimized or lost sight of in the repudiation of the mistaken contexts in which they are sometimes found. Nothing in this book is more impressive than the demonstration of the fact that the radical at his best is trying to do work that the Christian on the average has too often neglected. Nor can any Christian doubt that the most effective remedy for the mistakes of the radical is the devotion of the Christian spirit to the work of social justice. There will be many who will not find the author's analysis of the basic problems of our order quite complete, but it is hard to see how anyone can fail to be moved by her account of her own direct and varied participation in the life of the abused and the unfortunate.

But she is no less exciting when she recounts the stages by which she advanced from those first stirrings in an essentially religious though untutored young soul of an attraction to God to a profound and irresistible realization of God as the end of her being that brought her, at tragic personal cost, into the Church. It is one of the most moving conversion stories I know. Its theme is that of Francis Thompson's "The Hound of Heaven" which Dorothy Day first heard from the lips of Eugene O'Neill, one cold winter evening in the back room of a saloon in New York. It is a story to fill any cradle Catholic with shame at the thought of how little he has made of his heritage and with joy at the sure though not always discernible ways in which God finds out His children. There is a touch of homeliness to the telling of this story that gives freshness to the ageless splendor of it.

And something should be added of the richness of the book for all its brevity and compression. The author has very wisely eschewed the irrelevant personal detail, but she has given a very lively picture of the world of the twenties in which she played so sensitive and active a part. Men and women famous in the world of literature and of labor alike move through its pages in the heyday of

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their personal power or more interestingly still in the glow of youthful hope and struggle. For all the author's reticence and modesty, none emerges more vividly or more appealingly than the young girl who made that pilgrimage with results so consequential for herself and for us.

HELEN C. WHITE.

BIOGRAPHY

The Captains and the Kings Depart. Journals and Letters of Reginald Viscount Esher. Two volumes. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $7.50 (*boxed*).

VISCOUNT ESHER was a kind of British version of Colonel House, the chief difference being that he retained his unofficial power and confidential position many years longer than the Texan. Like House, he placed his endless experience of political realities freely at the disposal of his government. Like House, he refused high office whenever he could, which was most of the time. Like House, he preferred to undertake special, confidential, slightly irregular missions which no one else could handle quite so deftly or so well.

Viscount Esher must be the only man in English history who ever refused two editorships and the offices of Undersecretary for Colonies, Undersecretary for War, Governor of Cape Colony, Secretary of State for War, and Viceroy of India, not to mention an earldom and the G.C.B.! Running down the chronological table of his life, one can almost always pick out the biggest offers by looking for the word "Refused."

He owed his inside knowledge of political, social and international life to his privileged position as confidante of Edward VII and George V, and especially to an official post which he did accept — Keeper of the King's Archives. Esher controlled the papers that "told all."

The previous four volumes of his Journals and Letters have been immensely interesting. They have handled the pre-war doings of the mighty of this earth in a chatty and informal — though at times painfully respectful — way. But the reader has always been left with an uncomfortable feeling that Viscount Esher's story of the war years would be vastly more interesting. In these two volumes, the whole story of his activity behind the lines, and mostly behind the scenes, is set forth at last.

It is not a particularly important story. There are no earth-shaking revelations. But no one can read these books without being highly entertained and at the same time gaining a new insight into the personal, often importantly personal, relationships that determine the course of world affairs. Their intimate, day-by-day record brings to life the diplomats, generals and politicians who really ran the World War.

Sometimes the book has a strange vividness. There is an unforgettable picture of Edward VII's body, watched only by his Queen, "his hands laid on the counterpane, with the pink sleeve of his pink nightdress showing." Somehow, that pink nightdress is just human and trivial enough to be evocative.

There is an interesting series of entries just before the Armistice. Esher regretted the way in which control of the situation passed for a time wholly into the hands of the United States. It is a view of the matter that Americans rarely consider. The Viscount thought Lloyd George had "deliberately allowed political initiative to pass to the United States. To say that pique is not felt by our people would be to ignore the national pride of our race. However, we make the best of it, and Wilson becomes the leader of the Anglo-Saxon peoples at this great crisis in their story." He might have consoled himself by reflecting that Wilson was only one generation away from the British Isles.

Esher also foresaw the sordid struggles of the peace conference: "The game of grab has begun. Whether Wilson will stand it or how much he will stand is the problem." He was writing that even before the Armistice, little realizing that Wilson would permit enough "game of grab" to wreck the peace eventually and bring us, twenty years later, to the brink of a new catastrophe.

JOHN BAKELESS.

A New Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart., by Sir Herbert Grierson. New York: Columbia University Press. $4.50.

SIR HERBERT GRIERSON'S life of Sir Walter is in the author's own words, "supplementary and corrective to Lockhart's biography." No one can ever hope to rival Lockhart's brilliant and monumental biography, yet there are things in Lockhart which are far from accurate, notably in his account of the financial dealings of Scott leading up to his bankruptcy and that of Constable. Lockhart being Scott's son-in-law was desirous of putting Sir Walter in the best possible light, and therefore softened the picture of Scott's very unbusinesslike proceedings. From letters recently discovered and a restudy of old sources Sir Herbert Grierson has been able to place the whole episode in a clear and less prejudiced light. Moreover he has been able for perhaps the first time to tell the full story of Scott's love for Miss Belsches, and also both to throw new light on the mystery connected with Lady Scott's mother, as well oddly enough to add new mystery to her antecedents.

Sir Herbert is a capable if not a brilliant writer, and it is a relief to know that he has not attempted the Strachey manner in writing his biography. In fact the Strachey manner of biographers is becoming a bore. Of course there was Strachey, and there are Guedella and Maurois. These gentlemen have given new life to old subjects, though often they have distorted the truth. But their disciples have neither their brilliancy of style nor their imagination, and the result has been that too many modern biographies are but poorly composed works of fiction. Such a method of writing would have been disastrous with Scott, whose solidity of mind and nobility of character are the keystones. Scott had his weaknesses, but his snobbery hurt no one, and his romanticism was equally amiable.

Sir Herbert Grierson, like John Buchan and Sir Hugh Walpole in their recent books, has approached his subject without any preconceived prejudices, or any desire to be smart. The result is that Sir Walter's fame, which for the last quarter-century has been under a cloud, is rapidly resuming the proportions due it. Scott was one of the great masters of lower middle-class Scottish portraiture, as well as the re-creator of a few larger figures such as Louis XI and James I, and he will certainly outlast the fame of the minnows who are his detractors.

GRENVILLE VERNON.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

The Black Man in White America, by John G. Van Deusen. Washington, D. C.: Associated Publishers. $3.25.

HARDLY any temperate observer will deny there has been a steady improvement in American race relations, specifically between the white and colored races, or

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that the trend toward cooperation has gained momentum during the last decade or two. We are still far removed from the desired goal of interracial rapprochement of course; the journey ahead is probably far greater than the distance behind. Since so much remains to be done, any new voice raised on the side of mutual tolerance and understanding is a welcome one.

Only in this or a similar frame of mind can we approach a just appraisal of Dr. Van Deusen's study of interracial friction. A coldly objective discussion of the volume would lead inevitably to the conclusion that it is a rather unsatisfactory work, a verdict which would be unfair to both the author and that part of the public which will find what he has to say interesting and informative. Dr. Van Deusen writes with convincing sincerity and not a little zeal, but unfortunately his good-will is not always equaled by his discernment. The result is a book of uneven merit in which instances of snap judgment, superficial observation and faulty inferences are far too numerous.

Discussing the Negro Church, Dr. Van Deusen asserts that "the minister throws his sentences as recklessly as his congregation throws dice, not knowing how they will land but hoping for the best." If he had made an objective study of his subject he would know that the Negro church member and the Negro crap-shooter are one and the same person only in extremely rare instances. And this reviewer can introduce him to crap-shooters who know precisely where the dice will land when they throw them. Again commenting on Negro preachers, he quotes a colored writer who calls them "frock-coated crooks and libertines." This is equivalent to quoting the canards of the "Decameron" in a monograph on the priests of the Middle Ages. Dr. Van Deusen's disapproval descends from pulpit to pews. "The Negro masses," he writes, "do not attach sufficient significance to the marriage tie, and their promiscuity has been commented on by many writers." The implication is that Negroes are more promiscuous than Caucasians, which may or may not be true. In view of the fact that numerous writers before and after Samuel Pepys down to reporters for the tabloids have commented on promiscuity among white people, it would be just as well to leave the matter an open question for competent research.

Similar instances of shallow observation could be piled up by the score. And there are curious omissions. In his chapter on the Negro press he neglects to mention that its prosperity depends largely on its national advertising, which is controlled by B. W. Ziff, a Jew. He fails to include the new and vigorous Catholic movement among the forces working toward interracial amity.

Most of Dr. Van Deusen's errors of fact and judgment occur when he attempts to describe intra-racial conditions among Negroes. When he turns to the field of interracial relations, where there is a growing body of statistics to guide him, he makes a better showing. His chapters on the Negro farmer, wage earner and woman worker are pithy and instructive; so are his remarks on the "exodus" and the Negro criminal. His chapter on the public school is crowded with useful information.

The book offers little that is original to readers who have already probed beneath the rind of the race problem, but it can hardly fail to promote better feeling among the larger body of readers who are just becoming aware that all minority riddles are not in central Europe.

THEOPHILUS LEWIS.

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PHILOSOPHY

History of Mediaeval Philosophy, by Maurice de Wulf; translated by Ernest C. Messenger. Volume Two: The Thirteenth Century. Third English edition, based on the sixth French edition. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $5.50.

ALL WHO are interested in the philosophy of the Middle Ages will find the present work an indispensable guide. The sixth French edition, here translated as the third edition in English, was more than a mere revision of Professor de Wulf's great work—it was "entirely recast."

This second volume consists of three sections of unequal length: the first dealing with the general cultural environment of the thirteenth century; the second section, the various masters and schools from Dominic Gundisalvi to John Duns Scotus; third, synthetic studies on corporate groups, doctrinal trends, the "common patrimony," the controversies and the relationships of philosophy and civilization. Throughout the work use is made of the most recent research, the English edition in some cases being more up to date in the bibliographies than is the French.

The first section gives the necessary background concerning the organization of teaching and the sources and aims of the schoolmen. It is regrettable that there have been omitted from the English edition about thirty pages of the original containing an interesting account of discoveries relating to the new translations of philosophic works into Latin which were done throughout the thirteenth century.

The second, and longest, section is a well-arranged history of all of the principal and many of the less important philosophers and theologians of the golden age of mediaeval thought. Well-selected bibliographies of works published up to 1936, appended to the end of each sub-section, and careful attention to the views of other historians of the period make this section the best general point of departure for English readers.

The concluding synthetic studies, especially that on the "common patrimony" of the thirteenth-century schoolmen, which gives Professor de Wulf's latest views on the extent and importance of the community of doctrine found at the time, form a useful complement to the main body of the work.

The translation by Ernest C. Messenger is capably done.

WILLIAM O'MEARA.

SCIENCE

Biology and Christian Belief, by W. Osborne Greenwood. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.75.

MANY recent books have explained the changing point of view of the physical sciences and their gradual abandonment of materialism. The author of the present volume, however, is the first to carry the new immaterialism into the field of biology in a book which can be understood by any intelligent reader.

The change has been going on for some years and Dr. Greenwood has done an admirable job in interpreting it. He quotes many important authorities to prove that life bears the imprint of mind even more definitely than does inert matter, and that it is most reasonable to regard the universe as the creation of an infinite Mind. The point of view of the mechanist is not ignored. It is presented as useful up to a certain point but is shown to be unreasonable and inadequate as a philosophy.

The book opens with a glance at the physical sciences. This shows that matter is composed of groups of disturbances with no substance in its make-up. It is organization, not material, and the energy of organization is continually transformed into less available types. Life requires even greater organization. It supplies its own energy from within, it moves itself, it grows by means of the transformation and assimilation of unlike matter. The living cell is a marvelous unit which bears the imprint of mind even more than does the atom. It reproduces itself, passes energy on to its progeny, and, in the green plant, the extraordinary change of non-living to living matter occurs whenever sunlight falls upon it. It is extraordinary because the act of becoming alive requires a striking change of attitude toward the environment—a change which cannot be accounted for simply by the increased complexity of molecular structure. Nor would this change be one bit less remarkable should we ever learn to bring inorganic matter to life in the laboratory. For we should simply have discovered another process and we would be using the materials prepared for that act by the processes of nature.

In like manner the brain, the physical basis of mind, is no more synonymous with mind than protoplasm, the physical basis of life, is synonymous with life. The sensori-motor areas of the brain can be mapped out and each one shown to control certain parts of the body. But the frontal lobes, the seat of the intellect, with exactly similar structure, cannot be treated in this way. There is no part whose destruction will cause a definite, predictable change in personality. In other words, the higher powers of the mind are not caged within a mechanical contrivance. The well-tried method of localization and cell specialization was discarded in favor of a harmonious whole when the seat of the intellect was prepared.

After mind comes personality. Each personality is a new creation and is itself creative. The more thoroughly it develops, the more distinct it becomes from the personalities of its parents, and the more thoroughly it realizes its own capabilities. Highest among these capabilities lies the possibility of more and more intimate contact with the Maker.

Many important arguments can only be mentioned here, such, for instance, as the brief description of cell division and reproduction along with the careful marshalling of that evidence against mechanism; the section on glands which effectively destroys the notion that glands control the man rather than the opposite, and the brief discussions of immortality and of things physical.

The next to last chapter claims that if the evidence for purpose in nature is not conclusive the only alternative is pure chance. It then sums up the objections to the latter as follows: Physics has discarded it; inheritance in living things is the negation of chance, and the whole trend of evolution forces the grudging admission from mechanists that it requires direction. Finally, Sir James Jeans's mathematical specifications for a fortuitous state rule it out as next to impossible.

The author clearly ascribes the world's troubles to the blank denial of the existence of God, and this denial to the supposed verdict of science. This book is a refutation of that supposition. It claims, with the hearty agreement of the reviewer, that science opens wide the various avenues through which man can learn to know his Maker.

WILLIAM M. AGAR.

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The Inner Forum

THE FACT that large parts of Southern and Western United States are without enough Catholic population to support resident clergy is well known. For generations, in these parts, the circuit-riding priest has been a familiar figure, where even this much spiritual ministration was practicable. It was to be expected that in time use would be made of the trailer to simplify the problems of such clergymen, and there have been a number of instances where very simple and primitive use has been made of trucks and even of rudimentary trailers to make more effective the activities of traveling pastors. It remained for the Paulist Fathers of Tennessee to have built for their use a fully equipped trailer-chapel, which has been in use throughout the state since the latter part of 1937. This trailer contains sleeping quarters for two priests—the Reverend James F. Cunningham and the Reverend Thomas M. Halloran—a circulating library, simple culinary apparatus, a space for conferences and confessions, and, in the back, an altar and a public address system. By lowering its rear wall and placing the trailer in such a position that a group of people can stand around its rear extremity, it is possible to celebrate Mass, preach, or even have a motion picture show. This first, fully equipped trailer was christened the "St. Lucy Catholic Motor-Chapel."

The success of this venture by the Paulists has led to the commissioning of a second trailer by the Diocesan Missionary Fathers of the Diocese of Richmond, Virginia —the "St. Mary of the Highways Chapel." This second trailer is in many respects similar to the first, but of course takes advantage of what was learned in the course of designing, building and using the first. The facilities provided are the same—sleeping, living and cooking for the priests; saying Mass, preaching, and motion pictures for the people. In both instances the trailers have been built by the Bender Body Company through Chittenden-Dane, Inc., of New York, the work being under the supervision of Mr. George Chaplin and the design being supervised by Mr. Maurice Lavanoux. In both cases the object of the designer has been to treat each project as a trailer, rather than to create an ecclesiastical atmosphere by retaining stylistic elements from historic forms of architecture. The result is said to be "stream-lined," logical and effective.

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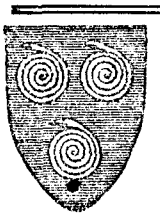

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